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THE LIFE
OF
ALEXANDER ALEXANDER.

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EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY J. JOHNSTONE.



ALEX. ALEXANDER,

*Engraved by Thomas Hodgells & Son.
from a picture by John Watson Gordon Esq.*



'THE LIFE
OF
ALEXANDER ALEXANDER:

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,

AND EDITED BY JOHN HOWELL,

AUTHOR OF "JOURNAL OF A SOLDIER," "LIFE OF JOHN NICOL," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

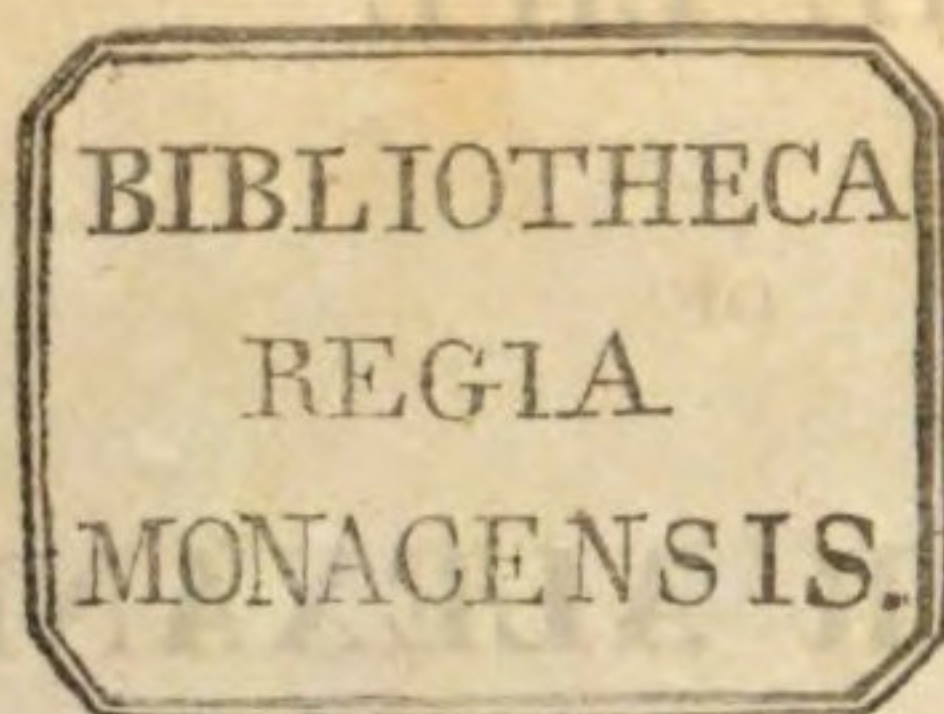
VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH:

AND T. CADELL, LONDON.

MDCCCXXX.

214. D.



PREFACE.

THE favour with which “The Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regiment,” “The Life of John Nicol, Mariner,” and “The Life of Alexander Selkirk,” have been received, while it has encouraged me to attempt the present work, renders it necessary for me to explain how it happened, that a humble individual like myself should have ventured to appear before the Public as a biographer.

My first effort, “The Journal of a Soldier,” was forced upon me by pity for the unfortunate individual, whom I found starving, naked, and bare, after having spent the prime of his life in the service of his country. When first I accidentally saw him he was working amidst the

snow, chilled by the wintry blast, from which his ragged garments could ill defend him, while the melting snow had free access to his feet, the soles of his shoes being held to them by a cord fastened round, as in the retreat to Corunna.

In this child of misery I recognised an old playfellow, and felt deeply for his misfortunes; but, alas! I had not myself the means to lend that aid which my soul yearned to give him. Fortunately I knew one whose heart and hand were ever open to pity, and to relieve the unfortunate,—“Hallowed for ever be her memory!” Many partook of her bounty who never knew the source from whence it flowed. The proudest boast of my life is, that I had her confidence, and the honour to be one of her almoners. The excellent person to whom I allude was Mrs. Ann Scott, mother of the justly celebrated Sir Walter Scott.

To her I applied in the poor soldier's behalf. Never shall I forget the angelic look of pity, and the tear that graced her venerable face, as I

related the tale of woe. I made no request, I named no sum. Her purse was put into my hand; "John," she said, "take what you think he may require." Much as I knew of her goodness, I was so overpowered my heart was too full to thank her. He was clothed, nor was I allowed to say who was the generous donor. Many other deserving individuals she relieved through me, under the same restraint.

As for the poor lad himself, he left the country during the period I was engaged in drawing up his narrative, and I have never heard of him since.

Pity for a second deserving individual again urged me to resume my pen. John Nicol I also found in utter destitution, as related at the conclusion of his narrative; but, alas! the bountiful Mrs. Scott had been called hence to enjoy her reward. I did my best for him; and I am happy to say he missed her not, for through the liberality, and humane attentions of his publisher, as well as the contributions of benevolent in-

dividuals, the old man's few remaining years were rendered comfortable; and the fund was not exhausted at his death, which was very sudden, for Mr. Blackwood had the satisfaction of paying over to his relations upwards of £30.

To the hero of the present work I was introduced by the publisher, whose active humanity was interested in his behalf. By appointment I met Alexander in Mr. B.'s shop, and had some conversation with him concerning the manuscripts he had brought to town. I was much impressed by the appearance of the man. There was an air of restlessness in his eye, and a shade of melancholy anxiety on his countenance which a long train of misfortunes can alone impart. I felt interested; his appearance was much in his favour, when dress was overlooked. As we conversed, I found he had undergone a strange variety of fortune. At the request of Mr. B., I took one portion of his manuscript home with me to peruse. I found it confusedly written, and many interesting facts mixed up

with extraneous matter. The portion I had was marked No. 29, and contained sixty-four close-written folio pages. There were thirty-three numbers in all, many of them containing more than thrice that number of pages. This was truly appalling. Can I be blamed for refusing to be Editor. This I did in the least offensive manner I could.

The evident distress, and melancholy look of Alexander shook my resolve; (I was busy with *The Life of Selkirk* at the time;) I gave him a faint hope of my undertaking the arduous task at some after period. Mr. B. was grieved for him, but acknowledged the justice of my objections. Soon after Alexander left Edinburgh for London.

I had almost forgot the circumstance, when he again returned to Edinburgh. Mr. B. once more humanely requested me to try what could be done for the unfortunate Alexander. Pity prevailed, and I commenced. For the last four-

teen months I have been engaged on this work, but only in the mornings, my whole attention being occupied during the day with my other avocations.

The difficulties I have had to surmount may be guessed at from the fact, that I have read and made extracts from above four thousand folio pages of manuscript; yet my labours have been greatly facilitated by the presence and conversation of Alexander, as every page of the work was read to him, for his correction and approval, as I proceeded with the narrative.

It has never been my fortune to converse with a person endowed with a more tenacious memory, or a greater regard for truth. He is a man according to my own heart; he will not sacrifice one iota of truth to give effect to an incident. The only difficulty I have had with him was in softening down the circumstances of his family concerns. I refused to go on with his Life if he persisted in publishing all he had written down.

I would not have given what is published, had I not thought it necessary to illustrate the effects that early education produces upon the after man, and at the same time to account for his bad success in life.

JOHN HOWELL.

EDINBURGH, May 25, 1830.

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JOHN HOWELL.

London, May 25, 1790.

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LIFE
OF
ALEXANDER ALEXANDER.

CHAPTER I.

The Author's Childhood and Adventures until his leaving Scotland for the Island of Carriacou, in the West Indies.—His abode there, and return to Scotland.

IN a small village, named Dundonald, in the shire of Ayr, I first awoke to consciousness. Here my father had placed me, for the purpose of concealment, under the care of a day-labourer, poor in the extreme, and illiberal as poor. Opprobrium and abuse were heaped upon me, and the most humbling drudgery. I was not even allowed to sit in the family circle, and was forced to obey all their calls. As my young mind opened, it was crushed and humbled by the vilest epithets, and low abuse from

the children of the family often stung to madness. My spirit arose, and I retaliated ; this brought upon me blows and abuse more gross from my keepers—“ How dared a vile *get* like me lift its hand to a lawful child ?” Thus were my spirits crushed, and all my youthful energies benumbed. I became dull and melancholy, and lost all confidence in myself. Often has a doubt crossed my young mind if I was of the same race as other children. To satisfy myself, often have I climbed up to the mirror, and carefully examined if there was any distinguishing mark of inferiority, or where the difference lay that denoted my degradation, but I could find none ; yet I was hardly allowed to be one of the human species. I mention it with pain, but so far was this carried, so prejudiced were these people, I once heard, in serious conversation on religious subjects, the eldest daughter inquire at her mother, if bastards had souls.

In a family like this, and in circumstances such as these, I was doomed to spend the joyous period of infancy. To me, the concealed and disowned child, it was a period of wanton tyranny and abuse. My father, who meant well, was deceived and uncon-

scious of my sufferings ; I had no one to whom I could complain, or unburden my young mind. A low system of cunning was continually kept in play. I was taught to fear my father, and dread his presence, which only occurred once a year, when he came to settle his accounts. He paid liberally and cheerfully all their demands for my maintenance, staid a short time with us, and I saw him no more until the stated period again arrived. He was always kind, and raised ambition in my infant mind, by promises such as these,—“ Sandy, be a good boy, and I will make a gentleman of you.” This was repeated almost at every visit ; it excited their envy, and was always a source of low abuse for them ; they took delight in wounding my young mind, by degrading comparisons upon my birth.

As strength came so did my sufferings. At the age of six years I was sent to school. This is the period I have heard others talk of as the happiest they had ever spent in their lives ; to me, the unprotected child, it was a term of suffering and misspent time.

John B——, old B—— as he was called, my worthy preceptor, was a man of immense import-

ance in the parish, and filled many offices:—he was schoolmaster, session-clerk, precentor, land-measurer, and clerk at sales;—of a sallow complexion and sour visage, middle stature, but lean as a walking-staff. For thirty years he had enjoyed his multiplicity of offices, and, undisturbed, accumulated his darling cash. His accent was very broad,—his manner of teaching in the oldest fashion; method he had none,—the rod was his chief reliance and auxiliary.

From the day I entered I was marked his victim. Of the horrid cruelty I suffered my body still bears the marks, the only scars I have to shew, after all the dangers I have come through. If a fault was committed in the village, and the culprit unknown, I was punished as the transgressor. To so great a length did this go, so unprotected and friendless was I, that the children to screen themselves often laid their faults at my door. I was the Master Nobody of the village; but unlike this notorious character I was always to be found. Often, after punishment, my innocence was made evident, yet it never saved me at the next imputation. All the redress I ever got was insult: “If you didna

do that, ye hae done waur ; and ye'll do waur yet, vile, worthless creature !” Often has the colour fled my cheek, yet conscious of no fault, at the stamp of his foot in the school, while, at the utmost stretch of his voice, he exclaimed, “ Silence ! or I’ll pu’ yer lugs as lang as Jowler’s, vile, worthless creatures !”

Had I been acquiring information under his tyranny it had been more bearable, for my young mind thirsted after knowledge ; but I thirsted in vain. If I made any inquiry at him, I was repulsed with insult and scorn, and forced down to my benumbing seat. I wished to learn Latin, and asked it from him ; he repulsed me before my school-fellows with, “ What wad a vile *get* like thee do wi’ that ? Dost thee think thy faither will e’er mak onything o’ thee but a trade ?—Sit down on yer seat.” Thus did he pocket my deluded father’s money for eight years, while the meanest offices in the school fell to my lot to perform. I was forced to sweep it, and carry the fuel in the winter months, and do all his messages ; while he would not allow any of his own sons to be seen in my company. By all I was despised,—by all I was abused.

This train of unmerited treatment broke my

young spirit, and utterly unfitted me for after life, making me too easy to yield to every one that came in opposition to me,—to bend and lose heart, when I ought to have borne up against them; and thus have I done all my life, unable to conquer those deep-rooted early habits forced upon me by cruelty and oppression. Naturally cheerful and loquacious, I became of a dull and melancholy turn, fearful to open my mouth lest I should be silenced by abuse and low epithets. I was called proud and morose, but I was neither,—it was a buoyant spirit crushed by cruel circumstances.

All this was unknown to my father, who was always pleased to see me, and said, “Sandy, be a good scholar, and I will make a gentleman of you;” always charging my tyrant to be good to me. Often has my blood boiled in my veins to hear him say, “I’m just as good to him as if he were my ain bairn,” yet I dared not complain to my kind parent; so much was an awe of him instilled into my mind by my selfish keepers by their cruel cunning, lest I should be removed, or run away from them.

They belied my mother, bestowing upon her the

vilest epithets ; and so completely had they succeeded, that had I been introduced to her presence I would have shunned her. With my father the same wicked policy was kept in play. If I angered him, he would do no more for me, and I would be turned off to beg or starve with my Highland mother ;—the same would be my fate were they to complain of me. Often this threat was sounded in my ears, for I was ever in fault ; yet I silently submitted to all their ill-usage and abuse. I always trembled for my father's visit, lest it should be his last ; and great was the merit they took with me for having concealed my last twelvemonth's faults.

But enough of this ;—I fear to weary my reader. Interesting as it is to me, I would not have obtruded it upon him, were it not under the impression that it may be useful to others, in enabling them to shun the rock upon which I suffered shipwreck. Indulge me with a few anecdotes, to illustrate the man and people I was doomed to suffer under, and waste the first sixteen years of my life, and then I will bid adieu to it for ever.

About this time old B——'s dominions began to be disturbed by invaders. The first was an itinerant

singing-master, who, during the summer months, contrived to pick up a livelihood by perambulating the country, stopping wherever he could pick up a few scholars. He found encouragement in Dundonald beyond his hopes, and soon improved the psalmody of the rustics. This was gall and wormwood to old B——; as no talent he possessed he valued more than his singing,—if a mixture of strange sounds, aided by gesticulations the most uncouth, can be called such.

The improvement that had taken place in harmony soon began to work contention in the church. Often were the precentor and congregation at variance. One day he raised the tune in his usual manner, but they would not follow; in vain he strove, they would have it another way than he would lead. In rage he struck the desk, and bawled, “If ye dinna sing better than that I’ll quat.” In amaze the minister arose, and gravely said, “Let us pray;” and thus the strife was quelled in the middle of the fourth line of the psalm.

One other scene, and I am done. It is given to illustrate his character, for I bear no malice. In one of his land-surveying excursions he caught a

cold, which rendered his voice scarce audible all the Saturday. On Sabbath morning it was unchanged. As he proceeded to the church, a young weaver lad, an excellent singer, kindly offered to officiate that day for him. Indignant he replied, "Na, na; these thirty years I hae na missed a day out o' the desk, and I'll no miss this day either." It was vain to say a word in reply in hopes to alter his determination. He mounted the desk with all his wonted self-importance,—the psalm was given out as usual,—up he rose,—the first line he attempted to read, but his voice was inaudible, his wonted gestures were all that could be distinguished; his contortions began to increase; a strange sound arose like that of a dog in the agonies of strangulation; the liquorice, with which his mouth was stuffed, besmeared his lips and chin, and sputtered all around; and the congregation began to titter at his hideous sounds, and antic efforts. The worthy minister started up in surprise, not in the least aware from whence came the strange noise he heard beneath him, and angry at the irreverent titter which profaned the house of God. He looked over the pulpit; their eyes met as old B—— gave

one of his wonted twists ; the cause was at once recognized ; and he himself conducted the psalmody of the day, while his precentor, nought abashed, continued to utter forth his uncouth sounds.

At length I broke out into open hostility against my teacher, and would no longer go to his school ; for I felt that my time was utterly thrown away. My keepers remonstrated, but at length yielded to my importunities ; and I went, although it was the dead of winter, a distance of two miles to another master, the reverse of my former. He was just and impartial, anxious in the extreme to communicate information to all his pupils. Here I had to unlearn all I had been acquiring for the last eight years ; and now my progress was rapid, for I was protected from insult and encouraged in my efforts. Once only I had the wonted insult sounded in my ears, which had every day been my fate in the former school. Mr. Y—— seized the culprit and dragged him forth to punishment. With my eyes suffused in tears, my face covered with blushes, I looked on in amazement, my heart overpowered with gratitude, to find that there was a man who felt for the unfortunate, and would repress unmerited in-

sult. Under his tuition I passed two years ; in his school happy, but in misery at home ; for there my treatment was unchanged. So weak were their minds, so deep-rooted their prejudices, they neither knew nor cared for the sufferings they caused.

Once on my return from school, I saw a hare sitting under their cow ; as I came up, the hare looked hard at me, ere she fled, and pursued her route only a short way from the cow. I thought it was a witch, as I was brought up in a firm belief of such things. I told my keeper when I returned ; alarm was in her looks, but she said nothing to me at the time. After supper she took the bible from the shelf and placed it upon her husband's knee, saying, " Goodman, we hae been ower lang without it, when the hares are sitting under our cow." That evening, family worship was commenced anew with vigour, after a long remission ; for it was not regular, only commencing under some alarm or affliction, then dying gradually away. Once only it continued with becoming fervour for a length of time, before it began to become languid. The occasion was as follows : One night the goodwife dreamed that John was dead ; next morning I was astonished to see

the oldest daughter and her in deep consultation, and both in tears. I was alarmed at their consultation; but the sight of their tears relieved my mind; I knew at once it could not refer to me. It was the awful dream engaged all their thoughts,—the subject of debate, whether it should be made known to the goodman. At length it was concluded that it would be a great sin to conceal it, as there was no doubt of its being a warning from heaven of his impending fate. The day passed heavily on; at length the evening came, and John returned from his wonted toil. When all the family assembled, a general gloom pervaded the circle; John inquired the cause; scarce audible for her sighs and tears, his wife began the following relation:—

“ Dear John, Oh! that e’er I should live to see this day; yestreen I dreamed I saw ye ill, Oh! very ill indeed, an’ ye aye grew waur, in spite of a’ that cou’d be done for ye; I watched by ye, wi’ a sair heart, an’ tearfu’ een; at last I saw ye dee, an’ I closed your een, an’ gat ye decently buried; but my heart was sae sair, that I wakened. Do ye no think it is a warning frae heaven that ye’ll no live lang?”

Here the old man and the whole family joined in

one general flood of tears ; and this interpretation was allowed by all. He took down the bible from the shelf, placed it upon his knees, and addressed them nearly in the following words :---

“ Oh ! my dear wife and bairns, as I am a deeing man, pay now particular attention to me ; be kind to your mother when I am away, as I will not be long amang ye ; oh ! forgive me if I have failed in my duty to any of ye ; sair hae I foughten for your support, and mickle pleasure I hae had in ye, but now I am called hence. And, oh ! may my blessing remain upon you all ; and as ye would thrive in this world and be happy in the next, be always dutiful to your widowed mother, and live in the fear of God ; shun ill company, and remember always to keep the Sabbath-day holy. I hae been a sinfu' negligent creature myself, but I trust in the Lord for pardon ; and, oh ! if it please His gracious name to lengthen my days, I'll be a better man than ever I hae been,—but I feel this will not be.” Here he burst into an agony of tears, in which he was joined by the whole present, except myself, for I was not taken into the circle, neither noticed more than if I had not been in the house. Each one was blessed

individually as they kneeled around, the old man placing both his hands upon their heads; but there was no blessing for me. Family worship was kept up with scrupulous attention for some weeks, then died away again, and the goodman lived for thirty years after. In such a family, and under such a teacher, was I placed for my education, every thing sacrificed for a foolish concealment. Yet I was not concealed; I was as well known to all the country round as the parish church. How unaccountable are the actions of men! My father, who is still unmarried, was then a young man, and my unfortunate mother an unprotected girl—an easy prey to the seducer's art; and I, the unfortunate, was the result. Here lay the crime; and for its concealment I was ruined, and the wished-for object not attained. My father did too much for me in one sense, and he did too little in another; what he did was done without judgment, but well meant. I was flattered by him that I was to be a gentleman, and yet no care taken of my education; and I was thus kept in the lowest society, subject to the most humbling abuse. Happy had it been for me had my father disowned me, and left me neglected with

my mother ; then I had known a parent's care ; no ambitious thought would have ever found a place in my mind, unless the circumstances offered. I would have been protected, or at least, had a tender bosom into which to have poured my young griefs, and shared my cares ; but the consolation of a parent I never knew——Proceed, proceed, Alexander——no more of this !

For the last three years, before I was removed, it had been proposed often and was at length put into execution. I was placed under the care of Mr. B—— of Kilwinning, a most worthy man. My father's wish was, that I might obtain some information as to the manner of conducting business, he being an expert and able law agent. He was most kind and humane, but I was particularly unhappy, and made no progress ; for here I was forced to assume the name of my foster parents, yet it was well known of whom I was the son. This led me into many little disagreeable dilemmas, and caused me many a blush ; for low and illiberal minds took advantage of it to pass their vulgar jokes. While here I studied the French language, but was prevented making much progress on account of bad health, the effects of my mental

sufferings. At length the wished-for period drew near, when I was to bid adieu to my country ; and my father did me every justice. I was well supplied with every necessary both for use and comfort. As soon as all was ready I removed to Greenock, to await the sailing of the vessel, in which a cabin passage had been taken for me. As soon as I left Kilwinning I resumed my own name, firmly resolved, never, under any circumstances, let the consequences be what they might, to answer to the one my father had imposed upon me.

It was in Greenock I first mixed with the world ; and there I was truly happy, for I was treated as a gentleman in the boarding-house where I was placed. There were other gentlemen with whom I eat, who were so kind as to overlook my awkwardness and instruct me ; but I felt much for my own vulgarity of speech and manner. Yet I was comparatively happy ; I had more of my father's company, and he shewed me great kindness, endeavouring to instruct me, for at this time he perceived my deficiency ; and well he might,—until I arrived in Kilwinning, I never had had a knife and fork in my hand, nor had I seen a meal served up as

it ought to be. Conscious of this, I committed many blunders, more through extreme diffidence than awkwardness. In Dundonald at meals, there was but one knife and fork at table ; the goodwife cut the meat, if there was any, giving each one their portion, handed to him or her on a piece of oat-cake or bannock ; the goodman, the same as the children, had his mess handed to him ; but butcher meat was a delicacy reserved for the Sabbath-day.

I was destined for a planter in the West Indies, but my heart was in the army. I wanted confidence to ask a commission from my father, even when he offered it to me at this time ; for once in the streets of Greenock, as we walked along, while the Edinburgh militia were at parade, he said, “ Sandy would you like to be an officer, for I will get you a commission if you would prefer it.” My heart bounded at the offer ; to accept it was upon my lips ; it was my chief desire ; but my neglected education, my rusticity froze the words. I felt I could not acquit myself as an officer amongst them ; and against my earnest wish, I replied, “ Dear Sir, as you have been at so much expense in my outfit, I will try the West Indies first.” No more passed, and he left

me at the same time ; but my heart was too full for utterance ; and in a few days afterwards I sailed for the West Indies in the ship *Minerva*, Captain Lyon, bound for Grenada.

I suffered much from sickness, until we reached Cork, and fain would have left the vessel there, but was ashamed. We sailed from thence, by license, in company with the *St. Andrew*, a Greenock vessel, without convoy, being both well armed and manned, on the 20th July, 1800, when again I was very sick for seven days ; but this gradually wore off, my appetite returned, I grew stronger, and my cough was not so frequent. I enjoyed the remainder of the voyage much. We had been fifteen days at sea, when a suspicious sail hove in sight. Captain Lyon, who was a resolute and skilful sailor, immediately prepared for action. The nettings were put up, the guns loaded, and matches lighted ; I had a boarding-pike put into my hand, with orders to stab the first man whom I saw attempting to board us.

Captain Lyon lay to for his opponent ; the crew, to a man, declared they would stand by him ; I saw nothing but courage in every face—I felt no fear.

“ Well, my lads,” says Lyon, “ we will give them play, let them be the devil himself. They shall not take us with ease and honour ; stand firm, my hearties ; level fair, fire sure, it is better than fast.” Thus we lay for about half-an-hour, out of gun-shot, when the strange sail put about and left us, as our consort had done. When Captain Lyon saw the conduct of his consort, his rage became excessive. He swore, as soon as he came up, which he soon did, he would pour a broadside into her. Words ran very high between them for some time, but he did not fire into the St. Andrew. The captains remained on bad terms until we reached Barbadoes, where they made it up, and we parted cheering each other.

Upon our arrival at Grenada, Captain Lyon found a sloop upon the eve of sailing for Carriacou, which came along side. I had my baggage put aboard ; then dined and went ashore, and walked through George Town to Carnash Bay, then went on board the sloop, and sailed for my destination, where we arrived in the evening of Sunday.

It was quite dark before we landed. Mr. Scott, the proprietor of the sloop, left me under a great

tree, while he proceeded to the Governor's house. The wet season had commenced, it rained in torrents ; I thought the heavens were melting, so large were the drops, and so rapid did they fall, compared with anything I had ever seen. The thunder rolled among the hills, as if they had been bursting and falling to pieces, while blaze after blaze of lightning, rendered, in quick succession, the surrounding objects visible. During the intervals the fire-flies darted around me ; I thought them real sparks of fire. I stood bewildered and amazed—the moments appeared hours—time seemed to stand still until some great work of destruction was accomplished. At length a negro boy arrived with a led horse. I leaped upon its back, with a thrill of joy, and proceeded to the Governor's house, where I was most kindly received.

After supper I retired to bed, and, for the first night in my life, I slept none ; my mind was in such a state of agitation. I felt alarmed at the thunder, which still continued to roll over my head as loud as ever ; I was all anxiety to see the strange country into which I had been transported. Before morning the storm abated. As soon as the

light began to appear, I arose and opened the window; all was new and strange to me. Nature looked beautiful, clothed in a richness of verdure I had never witnessed. I was agreeably surprised; my alarm of the preceding night left me all at once; the fragrance of the morning renovated my spirits; I felt comparatively happy. At this moment I heard, at the other side of the house, a sound as of the cracking of a whip, mixed with the complaints of a person in pain. I went to the window, where I saw a negro man stretched upon the ground, and another negro flogging him upon the buttocks, while a white man stood over him, and counted the lashes, directing the punishment, as the other applied the whip.

The other negroes were going out to their work in the fields, with old brown hats on their heads, and half-naked. This appeared, to my inexperienced mind, more strange than anything I saw; for the idea of the East and West Indies was always joined with riches in my thoughts; here I saw the people more poorly dressed than those I had left behind.

The punishment still went on; I felt my heart

sink within me, as I almost unconsciously exclaimed, "Is this the manner in which I am to be employed!" My own treatment under old B—— rushed upon my mind; I felt I was incapable of it; I wept for the poor black, and I wept for myself, as, extended upon the bed, I gave vent to my bitter feelings, and regret for not making choice of the commission my father had so kindly offered me, as my heart was in it. But how could I have done it, young, ignorant, and unpolished, as I felt myself. In Dundonald, I was as great a stranger to politeness as if I had been bred in Central Africa.

A little before breakfast, I came down more composed than I at first thought I could. Dr. Davidson, the depute-governor, was particularly kind to me. After supper, Mr. Scott had rode off to Hillsborough, and before he went promised to send a horse for me from Mr. Sterrat, the merchant to whom I was recommended; but the governor was so kind as to send the same horse and boy with me which I had the evening before.

As I rode along, I saw the negroes at work, but it did not appear harsh to me; they were not working so hard as I had often seen the people of

Dundonald. I was surprised to hear the voice of melody floating from a distance ; it was very pleasing ; I could not believe it was the slaves at work in a field a little way off, until I inquired at the boy, who spoke English, where the music came from. He answered, " O ! Massa, it negah woman make dat de singa at work." This singing is a rare occurrence in the forenoon, but towards sun-down nothing is more common.

Shortly after, I was met by the horse Mr. Sterrat was so kind as send. I felt very unhappy lest Mr. S. should address me as Mr. W——, the name I bore in Kilwinning, when I first saw him ; he being then on a visit, my father introduced me to him under the hated name. I was firmly resolved to assume no other than my father's. I was busy summing up resolution to come to an explanation with him, if he did, when I arrived at his store. He came out, and shaking hands, said, " How do you do, Mr. Alexander ?" Trivial as this circumstance may appear, I felt a load lifted from my mind ; for I trembled lest he had been instructed by my father to call me W——, as he knew all concern-

ing my birth, and so might expose me to those insults I had always borne. It was here, I hoped, that the blush of shame should never mantle my face upon this account.

Upon my entrance, I found a Monsieur Cherbonne waiting for me, with others of the planters, all Frenchmen, whose sons Mr. Sterrat had left at Kilwinning, anxious to hear from their children. As the sloop had come round, I went down to the harbour and brought their letters up to them, all of whom were much rejoiced, particularly Mons. Cherbonne, to whom I gave a watch, a gift from his son. He spoke very little English, but with what little French I had, we made a shift to understand each other. As he read the letter I had brought from his son, he lifted his head with surprise, and said, "*Quel est ce Mons. W——.*" I felt my knees totter beneath my body. In a moment Mr. Sterrat addressed him in French in a low voice, and no further mention was made of it. At his departure, he gave me a kind invitation to call upon him as often as I could conveniently; but these letters caused me much uneasiness during my stay

on the island ; as my being called W—— in some of them, and Alexander in others, caused much inquiry, and excited more curiosity than enough.

Mr. Sterrat not having a situation for me, I remained idle for about three weeks, during which time I was very much depressed in spirit from the manner in which I was used by his partner, Mr. MacI——, who was a Justice of the Peace. He was of a sly dissatisfied turn of mind, and never found direct fault with any one, yet never ceased his indirect attacks. They were made in such a way that it was not possible to repress them. It was his manner to walk backward and forward, stooping, his hands resting upon his haunches, muttering to himself, first at one, then at another as they came in course. The following dialogue passed between him and me, the day after my arrival.

Mac. Ye cam oot in the cābin, lad ?

A. Yes, sir.

Mac. Uh-ay, its braw days noo ; ye'll be gaun to mak a fortune in a wee while, I'se warrant, whan ye hae come oot a gentleman ?

A. I am obliged to my father for his kindness, sir.

Mac. They're weel off, that hae sic fathers, my

man!—And away he walked, leaving me vexed and astonished at his abrupt manner. Yet he had a kind and feeling heart under all his asperity of manner; was attentive and keen in business, but could not endure to see any one unemployed. I did all in my power to render myself useful, but I was not required.

As I was in his store one Sunday forenoon, a poor, thin, and over-wrought negro came to complain; and his body bore the marks of severe punishment often repeated. He entered in the most abject manner, making every submissive gesture he could conceive; and thus as it were crawled into the store. The Justice of Peace, walking up to him in his usual manner, said—

Mac. A weel, my man, what want ye?

Neg. Oh! massa, me poor bad-used nigah, me wanta you me help.

Mac. Tell what's the matter. What am I to do for ye?

Neg. Ma massa flog a me much sore. Ma massa maka me work all Sabbadays too. Me worka ebba day, me no day ma self, like oder nigah!

Mac. Gar him pay ye for't, my man,—gar him pay ye.

Neg. He no pay me, massa, and he maka me work.

Mac. Ye're just the mair fool to do't, my man.

Neg. Whata me can do? Massa me flog, massa me kill!

Mac. I say ye're a fool to work on Sabbath, unless ye're paid for't. When I was a young birkie, I wrought on Sabbath mysel for naething, to please my master; but catch me noo doing ony like thing, unless I am payed, an weel too. Just gang away back, my man, an' dinna do't.

Neg. But massa, what me do?

Mac. Just gang awa back to yere master an' dinna do't, my man.—And he gently pushed the poor forlorn negro out of the store.

I felt surprised and grieved for the poor black, thinking there would be no more of it; but in a day or two after the Justice perceived the master of this negro passing, when he called him into the store.

Mac. How is a' wi' you the day, Mr. L——?

Mr. L. Thank you, sir—I hope you are well?

Mac. Geylie, geylie, I thank ye. I had a visit frae ane o' your people on Sunday, an' I dinna think ye're o'er guid to them, Mr. L——.

Mr. L. Who has dared to complain of me, sir?

Mac. Dinna be angry, my man; ye can easily pit a' right again. But do ye think it right to gar the poor creature work on Sabbath-day, an' no pay him for't? I'm sure ye wadna like it yeresel, Mr. L——.

Mr. L. O! sir, I see how it is; I shall take care there shall be no cause of complaint after this.

Mac. That's right. It's far better to settle the like o' thae things quietly, my man; for ye ken they maun be righted some time, and there's ways to do it.

This is a faint specimen of his sly way in all his doings.

Mr. Sterrat at length got me a situation upon a large cotton estate, called the Dumfries, with a gang of three-hundred negroes, Mr. Stuart, manager. I joined the estate upon Monday morning, and commenced my field duties, as youngest overseer, on Tuesday morning.

There were upon the estate two other overseers,

Mr. Bell, the oldest, or first overseer, had been indented at home by the proprietors for seven years. He had at this time only about three months to serve. I was meant to supply his place, as the other was an ignorant lad, who could barely read, and was just learning to write. He had been indented in the same manner, and had still three years to serve.

The duty of an overseer is very severe, and requires the most strict attention. We rose in the morning before daylight, and walked to that part of the estate where the slaves were to be employed, then called the roll upon the field, and commenced labour. At nine o'clock, if at work near the house, we went there for breakfast, the time being announced by the crack of the driver's whip, who is always a slave selected for that purpose ; if at any distance, we had it brought out to the field, by the domestics ; and the slaves always took theirs with them. At half-past nine the whip again announced by its crack that labour was to be resumed.

At noon the shell blew ; and whether near the house or at a distance, we went to it for dinner, the hour for which was one o'clock. Exactly at

two the whip cracked again, when we continued labour until half-an-hour before sun-down, when the whip announced the time had arrived for the gang to disperse to cut their proportion of grass for the cattle on the estate. About dusk the whole gang formed up in line, each with a bundle of grass upon their head, male and female; the list was then called over the same as in the morning, the grass thrown into its proper place, the watch set, and this concluded the business of the day.

It was the custom for the overseers to eat with the manager, unless he had company with him at table, then dinner was sent to the head overseer's house. After supper, having rested a little, we retired for the night, and next morning up before daybreak to resume our toils in the field; let the weather be wet or dry the same duties must be performed.

The rain here is exceeding heavy, and feels cold, very cold; it is often accompanied with violent thunder and lightning. The wet season is the period of most labour; for then weeds spring very fast, and, if not looked carefully after, would soon choke the cotton plants. The soil is stiff and clayey, ad-

heres to the shoes, and is difficult to walk upon in wet weather ; the musquitoes are very annoying, so much so, that my hands and face were one continued sore from their bites ; many a night I never could get one moment's sleep for them, so much did they torment me, but resumed my toils unfreshed, faint, and weary.

I commenced my duties in the worst season of the year. Even in the dry season it is bad enough for a new beginner, as the heat is most intense, and creates thirst, to allay which water is brought into the field by a negro man or woman, kept for the purpose, where it stands, in an open tub, broiling in the sun, with a calabash floating in it for every one to drink from, whether white or black. I being weakly from my long sickness sweat much, and my thirst was excessive. I loathed to drink from the same calabash, as many of the negroes had sores, and other loathsome diseases upon their faces and bodies, both African and Creole. I was surprised to see Mr. Bell drink with them ; he laughed at me, and said, " There is no other way, and I am well used to it." I was forced to comply ; but longed much to lay me down by a burn-side in Scotland,

and quench my thirst in its cool stream ; for on the fields of Carriacou it appeared far more precious than wine.

A great proportion of this island is extremely high, rocky, and precipitous ; other parts are low. In these the sun's rays are concentrated with cruel force ; the air is hot as an oven, until we reach the heights ; there the air is cooler, more especially at noon. Where there is the least patch of soil these rocky heights are cultivated, and require unceasing attention from both overseers and negroes.

Many of the negroes on this estate spoke neither French nor English, having only their own African dialects. They required to be drilled to their respective works ; this, and the negroes being much addicted to thieving, caused one continued current of roaring, bawling, swearing, and flogging, which hurt my feelings much. I liked my situation extremely ill.

The first Sunday morning after my arrival on the estate, Mr. Stuart brought an indenture for me to read and sign ; by which I was to become bound, under a penalty of £100, to serve on the estate for three years. This appeared an age in my inexpe-

rienced mind; besides I thought it unfair, that I, who had come out free, should be bound. I told my reasons to Mr. Stuart; at the same time I said, that I had not the smallest objection to become bound for one year on his terms, which was £95 a-year for the three years, bed and board. He bade me call and take the advice of Mr. Sterrat, and he would give me until the next Sunday to make up my mind.

I waited upon Mr. Sterrat, who strongly advised me to it. I was almost persuaded; once I had up the pen, but threw it down, and absolutely could not be prevailed upon, as I disliked my situation, and wished to get into a mercantile store. I remained the week, then bade adieu to the estate on the second Sabbath, and returned to Mr. Sterrat's to wait for a mercantile situation.

Mr. Sterrat was extremely kind and attentive to me, but old MacI—— was more bitter and direct in his attacks than ever. Three or four times a day he would walk about the store, when I was present, repeating half aloud, as he muttered to himself, his norland twang piercing my ears—"I cam here a poor herd callant amang the sailors; I kent nae-

body, an' naebody kent me,—but I did unco weel. I left the braes o' Lochaber wi' a' my claise on my back ; but it's different days noo ; folk cum out in the cābin, with a kist-fu' o' boots and braw claise, to spen' a fortune. But it's at ither folks expense."

My young heart was like to burst at his cruel taunts ; I was anxious to be employed. Only one circumstance deterred me from leaving the island at once, and returning to Scotland to importune my father for a commission. I did violence to my inclinations, lest I should give him any cause of offence ; but my heart was divided between my duty and my love for a military life.

Mons. Cherbonne was most kind and attentive to me. On the Monday after I left the Dumfries estate, I dined at his hospitable board for the first time. His family consisted of himself and Madame, two daughters, and two orphan wards who resided with him. The sons were in Scotland at Kilwinning, for their education. The girls were all beautiful. Mademoiselle Elizabet, the elder, was playful and harmless in her mirth as a lamb ; the younger was more sedate, but frank as her sister. The

oldest ward was of a retired turn of mind, inclining to melancholy, but it was of a melting sweetness. Her voice was harmony itself; her large dark eyes swam in a flood of mild radiance; while those of Elizabeth sparkled forth the buoyancy of her spirits. Compared with the females I had been forced to associate with, they were angels in my estimation. At my first introduction I felt overpowered by their kind attentions. I blushed and stammered as the consciousness of my want of good breeding forced itself upon me, and committed innumerable blunders which they were good-natured enough to take no notice of. All were anxious to relieve my evident embarrassment. Nothing but their goodness could have induced me to stop an hour under my awkward feelings; as it was I could have remained forever in their dear society.

They spoke no English, and I but little French, and what I did attempt was bad. Often I raised their innocent laugh at my awkward attempts; yet so gentle and mannerly was their mirth I felt no chagrin, but joined heartily in it. We contrived to make ourselves understood to each other, and were truly happy; but the time passed swiftly

on, and I bade them adieu, with a kind invitation to return on the following day, as I was out of employment. I had been too happy with them not to return; their society was too dear to me to be slighted. I was a welcome guest to young and old; was kindness on their parts; but unconsciously they wounded my feelings during the whole repast.

Madame inquired, if her sons had ever been in my father's house. I replied, No. Alas! I had never been there myself. Monsieur inquired, how many brothers and sisters I had? I replied, None. Madame inquired, if my mother was alive? Their friendly questions wrung my heart;—I had never seen her. Thus in bitterness I hung my head; they perceived my distress, pitied me, and ceased their inquiries; but I saw astonishment in their looks, for the ladies addressed me as Monsieur W——, when Monsieur Cherbonne corrected them. This all tended to increase my embarrassment. At length we went into the garden; Elizabet was by my side, the other ladies were at a little distance in earnest conversation. As we drew near them, I heard Elizabet's sister say, looking towards me, "Pauvre

diable." I felt my ears tingle, and the blood rush to my face. I almost sunk to the ground; and had I been able, I would have fled from the garden. I thought my unfortunate birth was discovered, and I would be either insulted or shunned by them; but their kind attentions to me, and the pity that beamed from every face, tranquillized my tortured mind. I did not recover my cheerfulness during the remainder of the day, but bade them adieu with gratitude for their kind importunities to return soon, and pensively walked back to Mr. Sterrat's.

At length he procured a clerkship for me in a store belonging to a Mr. Wilson, at La Bay, in Grenada, with £100 currency of salary, and to be found in every thing except clothing. I was on the eve of setting out for it, when word came that Mr. Wilson was dead.

As the time hung very heavy upon my hands, I passed much of it at Mons. Cherbonne's, where I was always most welcome, particularly to Elizabet and the eldest ward. My want of polite education could not be concealed; but I improved very fast under such examples. So awkward was I at first,

that the family regretted having sent their sons to Scotland for their education.

One day Monsieur asked me, "What kind of people are the Scotch; for they are not a polite people?"

"They prefer being honest and brave," I replied, "to being polite."

"Are they all like you, Monsieur Alexander?"

"No," I replied; "I was placed by my father in a family very ignorant and very poor."

The good man perceived the distress his questions caused whenever they referred to myself, and good-naturedly dropped them. I saw astonishment in his looks, mingled with pity. I was much depressed in mind, and very timid for many visits.

One day, at their table, I met a Monsieur Harry, an agreeable old man, who spoke to me in a serious manner about my leaving the Dumfries estate. I explained to him my reasons, which satisfied him; and, on the spot, he agreed to engage me for one year as his overseer, the terms to be left to Mr. Sterrat. I was extremely happy, as his house was in sight of my kind friends. Elizabet was never so happy as when I was present, while the orphan paid me

every delicate attention. On my part, the hours I did not spend with Elizabet hung heavy on my hands ; I loved her, but durst not own it even to myself.

Next morning I bade farewell to my kind friend Mr. Sterrat, and walked to Monsieur Harry's plantation, Mont Desirè. He was a native of France, by birth and education a gentleman, a rare commodity in the West India islands, particularly amongst the British. He spoke a little Spanish, had very little English, and was one of the best men I ever knew. To me he was a father, instructor, and friend. To his gang of one hundred and twenty-five negroes he was a kind and humane master. He was a true royalist, and had suffered much by the French Revolution.

The rules were nearly the same as on the Dumfries estate, only we had always every thing done and the watch set half-an-hour before dark. Here I was completely happy ; there was nothing left me to desire. I had a small horse, to ease my fatigue when upon the high parts of the estate. I was becoming perfect master of the French language, as, at mid-day, I wrote all my reports in it,

under my master's eye; and the young ladies took pleasure in teaching me to speak it properly. My indulgent master took pleasure in teaching me all he knew, both as a planter and in science. I was far better in this respect than if I had been in an academy.

In this climate, during the dry season, the nights are clear, and the stars beautiful. As we sat at Mons. Harry's door, enjoying the coolness of the evening, he had his telescope brought out, and delighted pointing out to me the heavenly bodies, so worthy of our admiration. At other times I read to him out of the best French authors. He encouraged, by every means, my thirst for information; pitied my want of it; and, like Monsieur Cherbonne, wondered what kind of people the Scotch were, as the specimens he had intercourse with on the island were very unpolished in general. What caused him to be more particular was the quantity and goodness of my clothes, which spoke great wealth in my parents, compared with those of the other young men, who in general were very bare. My ignorance, however, was extreme. One day a lady sent him a present of some oysters. He inquired what their

English name was. I had never seen any before, and told him I did not know. He asked if there were none in Scotland, and I said there were none. Many little circumstances as ridiculous were constantly occurring.

With the Cherbonnes I was a constant guest. All my pleasure lay at this time in their society; but the dear Elizabet was my choice. The eldest orphan showed me every delicate attention in her power; I was all gratitude, but Elizabet had my whole heart. More than once the orphan spoke to me of her rich plantation, and concealed the sigh as it arose from her lovely bosom. I felt as if I could have given all I might ever possess that she had been my sister; but far different were my feelings to Elizabet. Her parents were pleased with our love, and approved it; all was arranged; and I looked upon her as my future bride, our union being to take place after I had become master of the planting business. I had the most pleasing anticipations, and thought no event could intervene to mar my happiness:—all was joy and hope. Thus I stood secure upon the brink of a precipice, which I had not foresight enough to shun; but many a

bitter hour has this short period of pleasure cost my tortured mind,—never since has a ray of peace enlightened my dark and gloomy destiny.

As I said just now, all was arranged between me and my beloved Elizabet. I looked forward with confidence to that period, and devoted all my energies to become master of my business, and deserve her father's partiality in my favour.

Had I had no other stimulus, I felt bound by gratitude to be unremitting in my exertions for the interest of my kind master; and strange to tell, I found all the milkiness of my nature fade before my zeal, without a thought of the pain I was inflicting. As soon as a fault was committed, I ordered the slaves, male or female, to lie down, while the driver, by my orders, gave one or two dozen of lashes, just as I estimated the offence. There was no one to control me; I had become the complete slave proprietor; by the lash the work was done, and the people kept in subjection. As things were we could not proceed without it.

On the French estates the negroes were far better used than on the British; almost all the French proprietors were Roman Catholics. As the island

had formerly belonged to the French, a great proportion of the estates were in their hands, and French was the language of the island, the British being under the necessity to learn it before they could transact business generally. There was only one place of worship, a small Roman Catholic chapel, up at the Fort, but no Protestant clergyman resided upon the island; neither did I see any assemblage for worship among the Protestants during my stay; and their slaves were equally neglected. With the French it was quite different; they themselves regularly attended divine service, and encouraged their slaves to do the same; and discouraged all manner of vice and immorality as far as they could, encouraging marriage, the proprietors standing godfathers and godmothers to the children, and looking after their instruction in their religious duties. How different was the conduct of the British; they paid no more attention to the spiritual interests of their slaves than if they had been so many mules or horses; the consequence was, the negroes on their estates were far worse than on the French, and punishment more frequent and severe; while the French negroes were, on the contrary, orderly, and

punishment more rarely occurred. Still it did occur ; for the sense of moral rectitude was very dull among the slaves.

I was often in the chapel on Sunday with the French ladies, and was always much pleased with the attention and orderly conduct of the slaves. Their appearance indeed was very imposing and picturesque, both in going to and returning from church, dressed in their gay Sunday clothes, of all imaginable colours, from the purest white to the brightest scarlet ; black was the only hue they did not affect, as they had it in perfection in many of their own pleasing countenances. It is of the female slaves I speak ; the male slaves were also well dressed in their black hats and light coloured cotton jackets and trousers.

My abode with the good Mons. Harry was the happiest period of my life. My days were spent in the fields attending my duties ; my evenings, in receiving instruction, or with my beloved Elizabet. Even in this paradise I had many bitter reflections caused by my ill-conducted education. Music and dancing was a favourite amusement among the planters, in neither of which I could join. This sank me

much in the eyes of all save the orphan and dear Elizabet, who ever found some excuse for me, and soothed my grief, but could not remove my sense of shame. So low did the want of this accomplishment sink me in the esteem of all, that I was once insulted even by a female slave on this account. These trifles, as they may appear to many, and the unfortunate circumstance of my birth, always kept my mind in a feverish state, and checked the natural buoyancy of my youthful spirits. I had become irascible and sensitive in the highest degree ; I foolishly thought all mankind were and thought like the people of Dundonald.

The greatest vice of the slaves is theft, which they lose no opportunity of practising, whether they are well or ill used. I do not take upon me to say that every slave will steal, but I found few belonging to the estate that could be trusted with their master's property. Gratitude for my master's kindness made me watchful after his interest ; he appreciated my endeavours, and was pleased with them ; but my zeal, aided by my sourness of mind, proved my ruin.

I detected a female slave with a quantity of In-

dian corn concealed about her clothes; I stopped her and commanded its restitution, which she boldly refused, and became abusive. I lost my temper and seized her, when she flew at me like a tiger-cat. I was young and slender; it was with great difficulty I stood my ground, and prevented her from tearing me with her teeth. I was forced to strike her with a cane I had in my hand ere she desisted; the blow was not severe, neither did I repeat it, but it bled her ear. I ordered her out of my presence, resolved to make an example of her for this act of insubordination, as soon as Mons. Harry returned, he not being at home. In the evening I reported the occurrence, when he only ordered her fifteen lashes. I remonstrated at the trifling punishment given for such an offence. When he replied, "I would have ordered more lashes, had you not struck and bled her ear." "I said that was done to prevent being bit by her." He became angry, and said, "The woman is my property, and I will do with her as I please." Words arose, I spoke in English for the sake of volubility, the French not coming readily to me. He not comprehending what I said, bawled out, "Parlez Francais?" "Non,

non," I replied, "I will speak English, my country language." With the most ineffable scorn mixed with rage depicted in his face, he said, "Your country, you no country!" "Yes, I have a country, and a good country." "I know you very well. Were you ever in your father's house, young man? Ha! you think Mademoiselle Elizabet marry you! no! she never marry you!" From the moment he said these words I was struck dumb. I stood as if I had been petrified; had a cauldron of scalding oil been thrown over me, a more burning sensation could not have pervaded my whole body; my mind became a chaos of confused ideas, but the thought of self-destruction was predominant. I rushed from the house and threw myself upon the ground, bewailing my cruel destiny; the blood rushed from my nostrils, so keen were my feelings.

I had been insulted by my friend and benefactor, what was I to expect from the other planters should I remain and marry Mademoiselle; for I doubted not her love even when she knew all. At my own table I might be as grossly insulted, then duels and their consequences must ensue, whether I or my insulter fell, bringing grief and sorrow to that heart

I would have died to give pleasure to or ease of grief. Towards morning I made up my mind to return to my father, and importune him for a commission in the army, when I doubted not soon to raise myself into notice, and then return and wed my dear Elizabet, and bring her off with me in triumph. Such gay but idle visions floated before my mind and cooled my feverish veins.

I kept this resolution concealed from all, until I could accomplish it. There was a ship going to sail for Grenada; by her I wrote to Captain Wylie of the snow Dart, bound from thence to Glasgow, requesting a passage home, and I would endeavour to make myself useful as far as lay in my power, as I had no money to pay for one. It being war time and men scarce, he agreed at once. As soon as I received his letter I packed up my clothes, and prepared to start, my mind having been for the last few days incapable of collected thought.

I got my trunks on board the sloop in the evening, and next morning told Mons. Harry I was going to return to Scotland. He, good man, appeared much surprised and grieved, saying, "He hoped it was not on account of what had passed the other

day." "I replied it was." "Pho! pho! I have forgot it all, I hope you will do the same." I made no answer to this, and the conversation dropped for the time.

At breakfast, he said, "Will you not take farewell of Elizabet and the ladies before you go." "Oh yes, I will go." Since I had heard the fatal words, the thought of seeing Elizabet before I sailed, had never entered my mind. My heart was torn by a variety of conflicting passions; the sloop was to sail that evening; I was hurried on by a dire fatality to my undoing. Kind Mons. Harry gave me his best horse to ride over to Mons. Cherbonne's. I took with me a silk umbrella to give as a keepsake to my loved Elizabet. When I entered the room where they were all assembled, I trembled with agitation; nor could I lift my eyes from the ground, until Elizabet came to me and said, "Why, my Alexander, will you return to Scotland?" With a voice scarce audible from emotion, I said, "Ah! Mademoiselle, there are too many reasons for my return." I heard a sob from that bosom in which lay my happiness, but she rushed from the room. Her father, in anger, said

something to me my ideas could not follow, and went after her. Thus I stood bewildered and lost, when the orphan-ward caught my eye ; as she gazed on me in tears I too could have wept, but my faculties were chained up. The umbrella was in my hand ; almost unconsciously, I said, “ Permettez que je vous presente ceci ; ” she replied, “ Non, non.” “ Faites moi le plaisir d’accepter ceci,” I unfortunately said. Her countenance brightened, as she took it gracefully from my hand. I rushed from this mansion of love and hospitality in a state of distraction, and galloped recklessly to the town. A thousand times has this scene been present to my mind, sleeping and waking. Keen and heart-rending as the reality was, I yet want words to describe it.

I called upon my sincere friend, Mr. Sterrat, to thank him for all his kindness ; distressed as I was, my mind shuddered at ingratitude. I found Mons. Harry there. As soon as I entered, Mr. Sterrat attacked me upon the folly of my present resolution. I felt the whole force and truth of his representation ; I was conquered, my mind began to waver ; the good Mons. Harry never spoke, but listened to all that was said, in great anxiety,

anxious for my remaining :—my good genius urged me to remain.

I was on the point of consenting to what I wished, when my evil genius called to my recollection the scene I had gone through in Mons. Cherbonne's. The conviction flashed upon my mind, I had made my present to the wrong female,—how can I ever look Elizabet in the face, after having given my umbrella to her rival. I felt I had undone myself. How could I wound the feelings of the orphan, by saying I gave her the keepsake I meant for Elizabet, or how explain to Elizabet, without making dispeace in a family where I had received nothing but kindness and love. My wavering resolution was fixed; and I firmly said I would not remain upon the island.

Mons. Harry immediately paid me for the time I had served him, went with me to the water's edge, and blessed me, wishing me all manner of happiness. I wrung his hand in an agony of despair; I could not have spoken had my life depended upon my voice. As soon as I was on board I lay down and fairly wept; a presentiment of my future sorrows haunted my mind—I felt completely depressed, and sobbed aloud.

We anchored at Guave that night, and next morning I was landed at George Town, where I wandered about for some time almost in a state of distraction, then went on board the brig in which I was to sail for Scotland. We lay here for nine days, and during all the time I was a prey to the keenest anguish, resolved to return, yet afraid of the reception I might receive; a gloomy foreboding of some impending evil I could not foresee, haunted me day and night. I was offered a clerkship in Grenada which I would not accept; yet I had no fault to the situation; I was hurried home by an impulse I could not control; I foolishly thought that my father, who had done so much for me, would do a little more, and obtain me a commission in the army.

On the second Sunday in January, 1801, we sailed for Tortola, and joined convoy of the Southampton frigate. After a dangerous and stormy passage we reached Port Glasgow on the 19th February, being a passage of 28 days. As soon as I landed, I went straight to my old lodgings in Greenock, and then waited upon Mr. S——, who wrote to my father, informing him of my arrival.

CHAPTER II.

The Author's reception by his father—He is forced on board a vessel bound for Quebec—Makes his elopement from the ship on her passage—Returns to Glasgow, and enlists into the Royal artillery.—Treatment in the army.—Embarkation for the Island of Ceylon, and voyage.

THE whole night, and part of the next day, I past in the greatest anxiety ; I had taken a rash and foolish step, yet I had no conception that my father could have acted as he did ; his rage—for I cannot call it anger—was excessive ; no criminal on the eve of his trial could suffer more than I did until his letter arrived, which was in the afternoon. Mr. A. S—— read it to me. My heart sunk ; I could not believe my ears ; I read it myself ; it was to the following tenor.

To Mr. A. S——, Jun.

Sir,

Tell the blade since he has come back from the West Indies, and wants any money from me, he is welcome to a shilling or eighteen-pence to buy a knife to cut his throat, or a rope to hang himself; but any more he shall not have from me.

“Yours, &c.

“A. A——.”

I was so dreadfully alarmed that my heart died within me. I did anticipate displeasure; but was not without hopes that my submission, and a true statement of my views, would bring him to my wishes. Alas! I was cruelly disappointed.

The next day my father came himself to Greenock. He was dreadfully enraged, and stormed at such a furious rate, that for some time I feared to open my mouth. He demanded, what I meant to do?

So much was I intimidated, that I meekly replied, whatever he would point out.

“I will point out nothing,—you have undone

all that I have already done for you. Why did you come back from Carriacou?"

I durst not tell him the true reason lest I should have made him worse, but humbly said, my health did not agree with the climate, and that I disliked the life of a planter.

After a great deal of abuse, he inquired if I would go to sea? I replied, "With pleasure, as a midshipman on board of a war-vessel, or in an Indiaman;"—but he would hear of nothing but my agreeing to go as an apprentice in a merchant vessel. I then summoned courage sufficient to beseech him for a commission in any regiment, at home or abroad. This only increased his wrath. He started upon his feet, exclaiming, "You refused one before you went to the West Indies. You know not what you would be at;—you are a perfect weathercock! You may enlist for a soldier; I know nothing else you are fit for. I know this will be the end of all I have done for you:"—and thus ended our first meeting.

I had several interviews with my father after this, many of them more harsh and stormy than the first. I was so completely humbled and broken

down, as to be equally indifferent, at the moment, what he made of me, or whither he sent me. My early education had quite incapacitated me for standing out against any one that opposed me; and, above all men alive, I stood most in dread of my own father.

For some days I led a life of the most miserable uncertainty. My money was nearly all spent; and though I had been endeavouring to procure a situation of some kind or other, I had hitherto failed. My father still, however, occasionally sent for me to some public-house or another in the town, for no other purpose apparently than the pleasure of abusing me. He seemed to delight in keeping me in a state of doubtful suspense; for though not entirely discarded, he carefully avoided promising to do any thing farther for me. In fact, it was quite evident, he cared not so much for my return, as he feared I should be discovered to be his son, often asking me, with evident alarm, if this or that one knew me, naming some of his particular friends. I told him, I had mentioned who I was to no one since my return. This assurance always seemed to relieve him;

then he would begin again upon me with the most abusive language and with dreadful prophecies of my future fate. I was almost distracted.

It was now, while suffering under my father's displeasure, that, for the first time in my life, the idea of searching for my mother entered into my mind, though I knew not where to apply for any information concerning her. I durst not speak of her to my father; and I knew the Dundonald people would not tell me any thing, even if they knew, after the many calumnies they had heaped upon her in my hearing. But let her be what she might, she was still my mother; my heart at this period felt so desolate, it yearned for one into whose bosom it might pour its sorrows. I felt my life a load I was weary of carrying, and fain would have laid it down. I envied even the children of the beggar that wandered from door to door, accompanied by their mother.

At length, early in April, my father once more sent for me. He did not assume the passionate humour which had been so common to him since my return, but calmly said, he had got a situation for me, although I did not deserve it. I thanked

him with my whole heart, which bounded in my bosom, and stopped my utterance.

“ You may either go out to Jamaica,” said he, “ as a book-keeper to Mr. Alexander, who, on condition of your binding yourself to him for three or four years, will give you a good salary, and a free passage in the steerage ; and I will speak to the Captain to be kind to you ; or you may go to Quebec, in the ship *Jane*, with Captain Macdonald, who will get you a situation there, or bind you an apprentice to his ship ; and if you are careful, and behave yourself, I will leave you something at my death.”

My mind was relieved, and I felt happy, at being once more reconciled to my father, although sadly disappointed that he would not get me a commission. We parted friends, as I thought, he giving me until next day to make up my mind.

Next day, accordingly, I was sent for, but how great was the change that had taken place during this short interval. He looked pale and ghastly when I made my appearance ; and, after upbraiding me with my return, he rose, and desiring me to follow him, left the house. I did so, he walk-

ing very fast, and occasionally looking behind him to see if I was following, until we came to the edge of the middle quay, when he suddenly halted, and in a tone of the most bitter irony taunted me with cowardice. "You returned from the West Indies through the fear of dying,—you will die here as well as there. I cannot keep you alive, any more than I can myself."

I wondered much what he meant by coming to this spot, and using such language,—for we stood on the very edge of the quay;—but my wonder ceased when he pointed to the water, and said, "There, you vile disgrace to me! go end my cares, and drown yourself! You may as well die now as after."

I gazed on him with silent horror,—my knees shook under me,—my eyes grew dim, as he, jogging me with his elbow, reiterated his dreadful words. The thought rushed upon my mind, surely God will forgive me if I do, urged as I am. In truth, I had almost resolved; but the idea was so horrible to be thus urged by a parent, that I shrunk from him in terror, and staggered to some distance, fearful he would push me over, he had

such a determined and dreadful cast of countenance. After a momentary pause, in this painful situation, he suddenly approached me, and, seizing my arm, led me quite passively to a house in the town. During the whole way he never spoke, until we entered a large handsome room, when seating himself, and ordering me to stand up before him like a culprit, he poured out a torrent of abuse and prophecy against me, with a severity and harshness I shall not relate. At length, to my great relief, Captain Macdonald came into the room, and the disagreeable topic was immediately dropped.

As the Captain entered, he smiled and said, "Is this the young man?" My father replied yes, and asked me if I had made up my mind. I knew not well what to say, I thought I might go to Jamaica, where, after remaining a year or two, I could find my way to Carriacou; but I was so completely crushed at the moment, that I could not give utterance to my wishes. Seeing, however, Captain Macdonald smile, and look kindly at me, my heart was at once won; and, all anxiety to get free from my father's cruel abuse, I faintly said I would go

with the Captain. We all three then went out, and my father bought me a watch coat, two check shirts, a jacket and trousers. This was my second outfit, and I never saw my father again for many years. He had the cruelty to endeavour to force upon me the hated name of my foster-parents, and actually introduced me to the Captain as such.

After a stay of two or three days, the *Jane* got under weigh on the 8th of April, 1801. I was thus once more forced, as much against my will as if I had been bound hand to foot, to herd with people with whom I could not associate. After tasting the sweets of polite society in Carriacou, I was again to be as I had been before I left Dundonald. Most unfortunately for me, there were in the *Jane*, as passengers, a crew of sailors going out for a new vessel that was building at Quebec. They were all west country men, rude alike in manner as in speech—as indeed all common seamen are—and with them I was forced to eat and sleep in the steerage. This I felt as no hardship, had it not been for their low and painful jests. I was a gentleman in distress, as they thought, and therefore a very fit subject for their low wit. I was

besides well provided in bedding, and had two well stored chests ; for this they envied me, and were ever on the alert to harass and vex me. At one time my bedding would be stowed away, when I was forced to lie upon the bare deck ; at other times my victuals would be spoiled or stolen ; and so unceasing were their mischievous pranks, that my life, for the short time I remained with them, was absolutely rendered miserable. One night my hammock was cut down, when I fell upon the edge of a cask, and bruised the side of my head so severely, besides being cut on the ear, that my hearing was affected by it for two or three years afterwards. I was not allowed to join their mess, but was forced to pick up a little victuals, after they were done, just where I could, whilst the relentless fellows laughed at my distress. I threatened to complain to the Captain, but this only made them laugh the more. I never did so, however, as it might only have made things worse, if that could be ; but I was firmly resolved to leave the ship the very first opportunity, as I felt conscious that they would have killed me with their bad usage, before we reached Quebec ; for I was very weakly at the

time, and much enfeebled from the great agitation I had so long been in, and the vexation I now suffered, at finding myself thus trepanned into banishment so much against my inclination.

We passed the Craig of Ailsa and steered for Belfast, intending to take in potatoes for the voyage. I had made up my mind to leave the vessel there, and enlist for a soldier at once ; but a very severe storm coming on, we were forced to run into Loch Ryan, and cast anchor off the Cairn. The storm continued for four days, during which many other vessels were also driven in. The weather abating, but the wind being contrary, the boat went occasionally on shore for water and provisions ; and each time I watched for an opportunity of going with her in vain. At length the wind became favourable, and the cable was ordered to be brought to the windlass, the second mate at the same time going on shore to fill a boat-load of water casks. I seized the opportunity and leaped into it, when called back to hold on the cable, I answered from the boat, that I would be of more use to the party watering. Fortunately there was no time for altercation, so we pulled to the shore without farther

molestation. The moment we landed, I very coolly walked off, telling the mate, as I bade him farewell, I would not go on board again. He immediately ran after me; but as I soon outstripped him, he gave up the chase, comforting himself that he had no charge of me.

No person interfered; all looked quietly on at us as I ran to escape; and certainly a pretty figure I was, dressed in my dirty slop jacket and trousers; my hands and face had not been washed during all the time I had been on board, and were absolutely begrimmed with dirt. I thus walked past the west end of the town of Cairn, then entered a field, and lay down behind a hedge until all danger of being retaken was past. I eagerly watched the motions of the vessel from my lurking place, and at length saw her sail away from me, ruminating the while upon my evil destiny, not having at this moment one penny in my pocket, nor a single friend in the wide world. In this melancholy situation I remained for a considerable time, resolving, as soon as the ship was out of sight, to walk round to Stranraer, and enlist at once, and thus end the uncertainty of my wayward fate.

As I gazed anxiously after the ship, she put about all at once, and hailed a vessel from Demerara, bound for Greenock. I rejoiced at this, for I suspected that it was done with the intention of putting my chests on board. I walked back to Cairn and inquired, when the people on the shore told me it was the case, as they heard the ship hailed, and saw it done, the vessels being at no distance. I then engaged two men to row me off to her, to get a change of clothes and five shillings out of my chest, all the money I had in the world.

As we approached the vessel, the mate and all hands were looking over her side, some calling out, "How do you do, Mr. Alexander?" although I knew none of them. I stood on the deck amazed, when the mate asked roughly what I wanted, but seeing a smile lurking in his face, this gave me heart to inquire if my chests and other articles had been put on board. He answered they had, but I could not get them, as they were directed to my father, the captain having got a letter to deliver with them. He then inquired if I knew him; but seeing I did not, he answered he knew both me and my father, and inquired what I would say to him for

running away. On this the cook called out, "Say to him, you were cast away upon a lee-shore, my lad, and, like Job's servant, escaped alone to tell him." Thus I stood blushing, the subject of their jests, at which they laughed heartily, unmindful of the pain they inflicted. At length the captain came on deck, and saluted me civilly. He was a grave, fatherly-looking man, and told me that his directions from Captain Macdonald were, to deliver my chests, along with a letter he had got, to my father; but that I might go below and shift myself, and he would carry them to Port-Glasgow, and allow me to have them, notwithstanding his directions. I sincerely thanked him for this, and begged a passage for myself; he replied that this was out of his power, as they had a great many passengers on board, and were short of provisions, but he would carry my things free of expense to me. I then made my last request, which was either to give me the letter to my father, or delay putting it into the post-office until I had received my things, to which the kind captain agreed. I then made a small bundle of necessaries and departed. The boat people were so unreasonable as to demand three shillings for their trouble in putting me on board, which I

refused ; and, after much altercation, I got them to take one shilling and sixpence, which reduced my whole stock of money to three shillings and sixpence.

I remained that night at the Cairn, and started to return to Port-Glasgow on foot. The weather was very fine, yet I trudged along with a heavy heart, a prey to doubts and fears. At times I felt a glow of honest pride swell in my bosom at my newly acquired freedom, and then I would boldly resolve to act in future for my own advancement in life, independent of my father, being perfectly conscious I had no more to look for from him. Soon, however, would this delicious feeling pass away, and give place to others of more stern reality, far less agreeable ; and in these moments, the tears would start into my eyes, when I thought of my beloved Elizabet, and the little hope there was of my ever seeing her again. The island of Carriacou I had left with painful regret, and now I felt the baneful consequences ; my hopes from my father had all proved fallacious. I was now a homeless wanderer, without a friend or relation on earth with whom to advise. I saw no

other resource for me but the army, (that refuge of unfortunate men,) which the whole bent of my mind was towards ; but to enlist as a private soldier I felt was beneath me, after the flattering prospects I so lately enjoyed ; yet I had no doubt of very soon emerging from the obscurity of the ranks, and visiting Carriacou as a gentleman holding his Majesty's commission, and bringing off my beloved, with the approbation of her parents. My young mind, unknowing the realities of life, saw no difficulties in the enterprise. Thus I beguiled the weary way, at times my mind bordering on despair, then soaring on the wings of hope.

In the forenoon of the third day spent in these meditations, I reached the town of Ayr, and passed through it as if I had just broken out of prison, afraid of being recognised by any person I had ever seen ; I felt a dread of my father, and really was afraid to fall into his hands. I slept in the house of my foster-parents in Dundonald that evening. They were surprised to see me, and were as kind as their circumstances would allow. My object was to inquire after my mother ; not at them, but at John S——, a brother of my foster-mother's,

who lived at Kilwinning; he had been my father's agent in taking me from my mother and keeping me so long in Dundonald. He was for many years the depositary of my father's secrets, and his willing servant of all-work. As soon as I entered his house, he flew at me in a rage, abusing me for returning, and thus throwing from me all that he and my father had done. I restrained my anger, in the vain hopes of mollifying him, but without success. We parted in anger without my attaining the desired object; for although I humbly requested the smallest information, he would impart none to me.

Finding myself foiled, and afraid of being discovered, I proceeded without delay to Port-Glasgow, debating with myself whether I should enlist at once, or attempt to get a clerkship either in Greenock or Glasgow, and after hoarding a little money, go back to Carriacou, where all my wishes centred,—though otherwise than as a gentleman, I had determined never to see the island more. On my arrival, I found the vessel lying at the quay. I got my chests and clothes, and the Captain had been as good as his word in not having put the letter into the post-office. I waited upon Mr. S——

who did not blame me for my return when he heard the manner in which I had been treated, but agreed with me in thinking, that, at least for some time to come, there could be no hope for me from my father ; I must rely entirely upon my own exertions, and he would do all in his power to obtain a situation for me. He kept his word, and for four or five days was unremitting in his inquiries, without the smallest success.

Thus situated, without a friend to consult, I kept all my feelings shut up in my own breast. With strangers I could not use any freedom, and those with whom I had been forced to associate had ever treated me as an inferior being to themselves, either insulting, or treating me with a condescending pity as hard to be borne as insult. My cash and prospects of every kind being all gone, I resolutely walked to Glasgow, determined to enlist with the first recruiting sergeant I met, as I felt a consciousness of being able to raise myself in any regiment by my sobriety and attention to my duties, knowing I had far more education than generally falls to the lot of most private soldiers.

Another feeling, not the least powerful, urged me on,—I longed to show my father I could rise in the world without his aid, and that all his prophecies of me would be falsified ; for, in his anger, he had repeatedly said, I would end in being a soldier, then get flogged and desert, and finish my career at the gallows. I could not bring myself to think he had for ever thrown me off, but still indulged the hope, that when he found I did behave well as a soldier, and was not that weathercock he called me, I might yet be aided by him in obtaining that commission on which I had set my heart.

As I sauntered about the streets of Glasgow, I saw the new guard marching to relieve the old, their band playing a cheerful air. This being the first military band I had ever heard, I was quite charmed with it, and followed, unconsciously taking the step and holding up my head. A military enthusiasm instantly seized me, and I felt as if a soldier's life was the only station for which nature had designed me.

When they halted, I addressed a recruiting sergeant, belonging to a highland regiment, who was

looking on, with, "That is a fine band, sergeant ;" he answered me with a grunt. I looked at him alike amazed and offended ; I meant it as an introduction to my offering myself to him as a recruit. Again I said, "This is a fine day ;" Donald would not take the hint, and only gave a second grunt. I left him in disgust, wondering how a soldier could be so very stupid,—I am now aware that I was far too well dressed.

Soon after I met a sergeant belonging to the Royal Artillery, and accosted him with a "Good morning, sergeant." He was a man of quite another stamp than the highlander ; we were soon as intimate as if we had been acquainted for years. He requested me to go to a public house, and have something to drink, which I refused ; but I begged to have a walk on Glasgow Green with him ; and away we went.

While we walked, so frank and friendly did he appear that I laid open my whole heart to him, and felt grateful for the interest he appeared to take in my welfare. When he had heard me out he said, "As a recruiting sergeant, you may think I have an interest in what I say, but, I assure

you, I have none. As your friend, I give my advice, which I have weighed thoroughly and impartially; and I say enlist at once, my brave fellow; it is the only thing for a young lad of spirit in any situation, but more so in yours. You have lost too much of your time already; if you enlist now, you will receive this day's pay, and you may think yourself very fortunate to get into so fine a corps. It is the best and most honourable under the crown, and has many advantages no other soldiers enjoy. We have superior pay, superior clothing, little marching, always riding with the guns when on expeditions, &c. Then you have your marching money, no musket nor kit to carry, just a sword such as you see the party wear. Besides, there is no flogging in the Royal Artillery, but every encouragement is held out for young men of every description, and much more so to such fine, spirited, well-educated, young fellows as you."

Thus he harangued, holding out a thousand false promises, with which I shall not trouble the reader, and concluded with his solemn assurance, that I would be a sergeant in six months, and an officer in a year or two at the very farthest. All this I

firmly believed; and I only stipulated that I was not to march up and down the town with the party, nor be seen much in his company. To this he readily agreed, under the proviso that I must appear before him at least once every day; and if I wished to leave the town for any time, I must get his leave, and then I might go where I pleased.

Every thing being thus arranged, I congratulated myself upon my good fortune, and requested to be sent off to the regiment immediately, but was much disappointed when he told me I could not join for three months, as he had sent off his last recruits only a day or two before. I then walked with him to the rendezvous, where he at once laid down a shilling, which I took up, as an earnest that I was willing to serve my king and country in his Majesty's 6th Battalion of Royal Artillery.

After drinking his Majesty's health, and success to his arms, the sergeant asked me to go to a surgeon, who lived in the High Street, to be examined. So deep was the impression the taunts and mockeries which I suffered in Dundonald had made, that I was afraid I would not pass, and felt a gleam of satisfaction when the surgeon pronounced

me a fine, active, healthy young man, able for service. In truth, I was both surprised and delighted to find myself pronounced like the rest of mankind by a competent judge.

Next forenoon, I went cheerfully to David Dale, Esq. Charlotte Street, and was attested, on Saturday the 25th of April, 1801. This ceremony was to me a very serious thing, as it was done with due solemnity; I looked upon it as a very binding obligation. I was sworn in as born in Glasgow. The sergeant entered me as a day-labourer. At this I remonstrated, but he silenced me by saying that it was his instructions, for all those who had no trade, to be entered as labourers. I was forced to submit, but felt, for the first time, that I had suffered a severe degradation.

As it may be curious to many, I will give a detail of the price I received for this disposal of myself. The bounty was eight guineas, and a crown to drink his Majesty's health. Now I, being an ignorant lad, was open to every imposition. I was to receive five guineas at present, and the other three, intended for regimental necessities, as soon as I joined the regiment. This I objected to, for

I was better furnished in every thing, except regimentals, than many an officer: But it was of no avail; the sergeant said, he must abide by his regimental orders.

My five guineas, therefore, I received under the following deductions, viz:—

Bounty,	£5	5	0
King's health,	0	5	0
Surgical inspection,	0	1	0
Justice of peace attestation,	0	1	0
Enlistment money,	0	1	0
			0 8 0
	£4	17	0

This was the exact sum I received at this time. Whenever I objected to any thing, the sergeant's answer was, it was the rule in the service; and by this same *rule* he excused all his impositions, such as half-a-crown I had to pay the drummer, for beating the points of war; this was a constant rule, and could not be dispensed with. I must also buy a cockade from him, and a suit of ribbons for his wife; this was also a constant rule. In short, every thing was the rule that tended to fleece the poor re-

cruit. These same ribbons for the wife, for instance, were sold regularly to every recruit, as the sergeant always laid them aside for the next occasion. Perhaps they had been bought and sold an hundred times for any thing I know. During the three months I remained in and about Glasgow, the time hung very heavy upon my hands. I had no acquaintance in the city. I could not associate with the party, for their vulgarity and drunkenness disgusted me. I was marked down by them as a low, mean fellow, because I did not dissipate with them, and foolishly riot away all my bounty in a day or two. Being obliged to appear before the sergeant once every day, I was thus brought into continual contact with them at the rendezvous, when they bantered and cajoled me by turns; and though I often gave them treats, still I was a bad fellow for not spending all I had at once. I did not value my money through love of it, but I found occasion for it in a manner they could not conceive. I had wants they dreamed not of; one was caused by our billets, which were always in the lowest and most filthy houses, where, besides being often ill used, we were always unwelcome intruders. To

avoid this I had a room for myself. The sergeant blamed me in a gentle manner, saying, I was extremely hard to please.

After a few days I requested leave of absence to walk to Dundonald to visit my foster-parents, and be out of the way for a day or two. Though I was fully resolved to keep my having enlisted a secret, until I was going away to join the army, I do not know how it was, but, under the promise of secrecy, I told my foster-mother. Poor woman, she sighed and wept for me; and the moment her oldest daughter entered, it was told to her, and in less than twenty-four hours was all over the country. I was thus aware too late of a folly a child might have avoided. I can only account for it thus: She was more kind to me at this visit than usual. Kindness was a thing to me so unwonted, that my heart overflowed with love, and unbosomed itself,—a thing I have ever done, often to my hurt,—a weakness inherent in my nature, and strengthened so much by my education, that although I have again and again been wounded and injured by it, I am still very apt to do the same.

I went down to Greenock to look after my ap-

parel and trunks. It was my wish to leave them until some future period with Mr. S——, but he declined this. I brought them to Glasgow, sold some of them, and others were wheedled from me by the party, as they all assured me they would be of no use when I reached the regiment. The remainder I sent to Dundonald, under the care of the second son, who, during his visit to Glasgow, did all in his power to sour my mind at the army, and induce me to desert. I was informed by him, that the anger of my father was excessive; yet his after conduct leads me to think that he secretly rejoiced at the step I had taken; for his cruel prophecies and ironical advice was now followed,—my concealment and removal were certain. He even declared to my friends, he would not buy me off if one shilling would do it; and if I did desert, he would be the very first to deliver me up and have me soundly flogged.

During all this idle time, I felt most anxious to get a sight of my unfortunate mother before I left Scotland, but my search was in vain. It was my custom day after day to wander through the streets of Glasgow in quest of her, hoping she was there; as my keepers always said she was in Glasgow

when they spoke of her, and that she was in the lowest walks of life, the prey of want and vice. Every female that sold wares upon the streets, and appeared of sufficient age, I introduced myself to, while I cheapened what she sold, or made a purchase. Thus there was not one of them but I knew her name, and a little of her history; and many a melancholy tale I heard that wrung my heart.

I will here relate an anecdote, as at once illustrative of the bashfulness of my nature at this time, and the unhappy infirmity of my resolution. When I passed through Dundonald from Stranraer, I was told that my father's brother, a Lieutenant in the 4th regiment, or King's Own, was at this very time recruiting in Glasgow. As I had been brought up from infancy in the utmost dread of this gentleman, it was my especial care, on my enlistment, to avoid taking the bounty from his regiment. I often saw him in Glasgow in the course of my idle strolls; but though I earnestly wished to introduce myself to him before I left Scotland, in the hope that he might do a little for me in the way of promotion, I blush to confess,

that I never could muster sufficient resolution to address him, even after watching for an opportunity to do so.

At length these tedious three months expired, and I marched for Edinburgh to join the recruits there, and soon after embarked at Leith. We were placed in the steerage, but my heart revolted at the gross conversation and libertine manners of my associates, so I paid the difference out of my own pocket, and went into the cabin. We had a tedious passage of eight days. There were a great number of passengers, all very happy, except myself, for my heart began to misgive me, that the life of a soldier was not that of a gentleman; and if the men in the regiment were of the same habits as the recruits, I had fallen low indeed when I voluntarily chose such associates. My only comfort lay in the thought, that the more ignorant and immoral the majority were, I would be the sooner distinguished by my good behaviour: foolish hope!—but it kept my heart up, amidst all its doubts and fears.

I bade a friendly adieu to my fellow passengers, having, while on board, passed myself off for a cadet

going to join the artillery at Woolwich. The day after my arrival at the barracks, the quarter-master-sergeant served me out a coarse frock and trousers, a leathern cap and stock, a tin queue and rosette, six false collars, a tin canteen, turnscrew and worm, as I had all the other necessaries in my own possession. Again the surgeon pronounced me a proper young man. He looked at me with surprise as I stripped ; for it is a very rare occurrence to see a recruit so well furnished in every thing as I was, most of them being ragged and dirty. My genteel appearance, however, and my trunk, were a source of much annoyance to me, and created me much ill will. My comrades, it appeared, hated to see any one better provided than themselves ; and I soon found, to my sad experience, that the more ignorant and poor a man is, so much the more happy will he be in the army. During the severe time I spent at drill, I suffered much both from the drill-sergeants and men. Every advantage was taken of my ignorance and reserved turn, and my food and other little articles were often stolen from me ; but I need not enter into particulars. I happened to be the only person in the room who had a trunk,

and as it was ever in the way, and I continually abused on its account, I resolved to free myself at least from this annoyance by parting with it. Accordingly I divided what it contained amongst the non-commissioned officers, and gave it to the sergeant-major, which was certainly very foolish, as not having enough to please all, I only made enemies of those who got nothing, and gained not one single friend. Though punctual to my duties, and very anxious to learn, I escaped not the lowest and most unfeeling abuse; this not only made me low-spirited, but got me the name of being a silent, sulky, ill-tempered fellow. All this, however, was my own doings. I had voluntarily become one of a class of men who were treated as machines, denied the use of the thinking faculty, to act by a will not their own, and was treated accordingly. My involuntary mistakes were snarled at, my want of experience and dexterity were unpardonable crimes; one day I was fairly turned out of the ranks, and a file of men ordered to conduct me to the guard-house, for a very trifling blunder. I was not treated worse than my fellows.

Observing the other men wiping out their mus-

kets with a rag, I attempted to do the same, but unfortunately it stuck fast in the barrel of my piece. Having in vain attempted to get it out, I rammed it home as hard as I could. This I found was very embarrassing for me at drill for four or five mornings; at the word "Spring ramrods," I escaped by doing it at the same instant with my right-hand man, and placing my ramrod on the bend of my bayonet; but at last the drill-bombardier detected the false motion. He immediately came up to me, bawling, "Spring your ramrod again, you d——d rascal, Alexander." I did so, and it gave a hollow thud, which at once told the whole story. He seized my musket in a moment, and measuring with his fingers what the ramrod wanted of going down to the breech, his countenance became suddenly pale, and he actually began to shake from agitation. "Fall out, fall out, you precious villain!" he cried, "March him off to the guard-house,—a charge, a full charge by G—! I hope you will get a thousand lashes for this, you young blackguard." At this instant the drill-sergeant came up, "Stop a moment," cried the bombardier, "here is a witness against the rascal."

“What is the matter?” said the sergeant, mildly; “for what is this recruit a prisoner?” “Look here, sergeant, look here, d——n me if the fellow has not got his musket charged—full charged by G——!” “Nonsense, nonsense,” returned the sergeant, “have you examined the lad’s piece.” Then turning to me, he asked, “What have you got in your musket, sir?” “It is a rag,” I replied, and explained how it happened. For the first time it now struck the drill-bombardier to examine my piece. There was nothing in the pan, and a wooden snapper in the dog-head; I was again ordered to fall in. We were much inclined to laugh at him, but durst not, so much were we kept under subjection. We durst not indeed open a mouth in the ranks, even when insulted and abused for faults we did not commit. “Silence, or I’ll confine you, sir.”—“I will get you d——d-well flogged.”—“Did you see yon yesterday?—how did you like it?”—“I will get you the same, you lazy rascal.”—“Steady, d——n you, steady! or I’ll send you to the guard-house!” These short, but fearful sentences, were rung in our ears generally all the time we were on the drill-ground; and so effectually did they terrify us, that,

out of a squad of thirty with whom I commenced drill, there were not above twelve that remained until we were dismissed to join the battalion. In truth, had it not been the sacredness of my oath, and the resolution I had made to falsify my father's predictions, I would have run for it myself, it being a common saying amongst my comrades, "When we run, there is a chance to escape being flogged, and if we are caught, we will only get that flogging we are certain of by staying." Almost every morning there were some absent without leave, and the flogging was of course threatened in a more terrific manner.

This threat of flogging was no idle matter in our eyes; there being scarce a day in which we did not see one or more of the soldiers get from three to seven hundred lashes. We never could see any crime these poor fellows had committed to merit such cruelty. We heard their crimes read to us indeed, as we were all forced to be present, such as unsoldierlike conduct, (this was a common crime laid to our charge at drill every day a hundred times,) or insolence to bombardier A. or lance-corporal B. on duty. For petty misdemeanors,

such as these, I saw the men every day punished with a severity I had never beheld exercised on the slaves in Carriacou. At this time, and indeed for years after, I have actually trembled at the threat of a lance-bombardier ; and not myself only, but the stoutest and oldest soldier did the same ; for so severe was the discipline, that if he had only malice enough to make the charge, a flogging was certain to follow.

The first man I saw punished my heart was like to burst, it was with difficulty I could restrain my tears, as the thought broke upon me of what I had brought myself to. Indeed, my spirits sunk from that day, and all hopes of bettering my condition in life fled forever. I had hitherto only seen the pomp of war—the gloss and glitter of the army ; now I was introduced into the arcana of its organization, and under the direct influence of its stern economy. I felt how much I had been deceived. The poor slaves in Carriacou rushed upon my mind : I had often ordered them punishment for what I conceived faults, because others did the same, under the idea, that it was necessary for their right government ; but never had I seen them punished

to the extent I saw the soldiers suffer during my stay at Woolwich, and for offences, too, of which a slave proprietor would have taken no notice.

Under this wanton abuse of the lash, a thousand vexations and petty tyrannies were daily exercised by the non-commissioned officers. They were, in general, a mean, sordid, and illiterate set of men; expert soldiers however,—proud of their power,—and jealous of it to a degree scarcely to be conceived. They, too, had their favourites; who consisted of all such as would truckle to them,—fetch and carry at their nod, even in matters not military,—and flatter and fawn upon them like so many spaniels. This I could never bring my heart to submit to; and, of course, many unjust things were done to me which I had no means of redressing; such as being placed on guard and piquet out of my regular routine of duty,—ordered for fatigue, &c. &c. If I, or any other in these circumstances, even gently remonstrated, it was, “Silence, sir! or I’ll confine you;”—“Say another word, and I’ll get you a d—d good flogging.” If a murmur was expressed after one of these emphatic sentences, we were sure to be marched off to the guard-house, report-

ed insolent to sergeant, corporal, bombardier, or even lance-bombardier A. or B., and perhaps get two or three hundred lashes.

A great cause of these abuses lay in the officers not interfering between the non-commissioned officers and the men, but contenting themselves with the scanty knowledge they gleaned from their daily reports. If a promotion from the ranks to a lance-bombardier was to be made, it was always at the recommendation of the sergeant or corporal of the company, because the officers generally knew not even the names of their men, far less their different qualifications and characters; so that often those whom the officers would have chosen were overlooked and kept back, through a spirit of envy and jealousy. Many of these non-commissioned officers could barely write their names.

As this became by degrees manifest to me, my hopes of promotion died away. I was not a favourite with the non-commissioned officers, because I would not bow my spirit low enough to them. I was sober and steady, and did all I was required without a murmur; but I was, at the same time, distant and reserved. And if I was rather inclined

to be somewhat dull and melancholy, how could I be otherwise when the thoughts that were ever uppermost in my mind were of Carriacou.

I thus got the character of being proud and sulky,—“a dictionary man,” because, when I spoke, my language did not come down to the level of their uninformed minds, and also because I never joined in their low ribaldry and profanity; but they could not call me a lawyer, for I argued none with them, nor ever found fault. Alas! I felt myself degraded as a common soldier, and, as such, despised by the working classes of my countrymen wherever I went. The first time I was made sensible of this was not one month after I had joined head-quarters at Woolwich.

One of my veteran comrades, who had assisted me to clean my accoutrements, I took to a public-house to treat him with some beer. Producing a seven-shilling piece from my pocket to pay the landlord, never shall I forget the look of suspicion he cast first on me, and then on the piece of gold. He rung it, and turned it over a hundred times still in doubt, and took the opinions of two or three in the room before he was satisfied, or gave

me my change. I felt extremely hurt at this treatment, the eyes of every one in the room being upon me, and asked my comrade, what all this meant? "O," replied he, "you know not yet what it is to be a soldier, nor the suspicions and insults you are liable to. Had you been a tradesman, now, or in coloured clothes, he would have taken it at once on his own opinion; but a soldier you will find to be an object of distrust wherever he goes." I had not one word to say, so keenly did I feel how low I had fallen.

Shortly after this, being dismissed from small-arms drill, I was sent upon a month's command to Purfleet, to do duty over the magazine. It was a very severe winter, being extremely cold, and we were only two or three nights a-week in bed. Purfleet was a dull, lonely place, more especially in the night; and the men, besides continually playing tricks upon each other, had many ridiculous stories of strange sights appearing on their posts, which were quite current, and firmly believed. With me they only excited a smile, though, on other grounds, I freely confess I did not feel quite comfortable. Some time before I joined this post, a sentinel had met his death in

a very distressing and unaccountable manner. A figure, dressed in white, had approached his round, and though he challenged it three times he received no answer. When in the act to fire, he was unaccountably thrown over a broad sluice, musket and all, and was very much bruised and cut about the head. On the arrival of the relief at his post, his groans were heard by them, but it was some time before he was found, and carried to the guard-house, where he continued very ill. He was immediately sent back to Woolwich, where he shortly after died in the hospital. This mysterious circumstance was never properly explained, and it sunk deep into the minds of the soldiers.

After the usual routine of duty I returned to Woolwich, where I remained until the month of March 1802, when I was ordered to march to Portsmouth, and join Captain R. E. H. Rogers's company, of the sixth battalion. I was much pleased at this, as I wished to see the world, and I was told, it was better to be in a company than a detachment. We remained at Portsmouth until the month of October 1802. Captain Rogers, though a severe disciplinarian, was very fond of his com-

pany, and did all in his power for our comfort. He got us relieved from our knapsacks ; we also gave in our arms on the Sabbath evening, and set off on Monday morning, carrying only our swords. At leaving Portsmouth all was joy and mirth throughout the company. We knew that we were going to be embarked in a short time for India. Every man in the company was busy in his mind calculating what he would do with the money we were certain to make there. I was not one of the least sanguine among them. My spirits, which had been much depressed, rose at this time, soothed with the hopes of still being able to rise in the service, and join my beloved Elizabet in a grade of my profession she would not blush to acknowledge. The whole night was a scene of joyful riot and song,—

“ Brisk were our troops, all roaring like thunder,
Pleased with the voyage, impatient for plunder.”

Next morning we marched off, the music playing “ Over the hills and far awa’.” Our march continued until the Sunday following, when we reached Chatham. Our duty here was not so severe as at Portsmouth, but we were much harassed by parades, and other military duties.

The winter was very cold and severe. We had in routine to go as far as Upnor Castle, across the river Medway, to do duty. One clear moonlight night, between the hours of ten and eleven, a singular circumstance happened to me, for which I neither can nor will attempt to account.

I was doing duty as sentinel in front of the guard-room; our orders were strict to allow no one to pass that way towards the castle, which contained immense military stores. I was walking backwards and forwards upon my post; my sword resting upon my left arm, musing upon my future prospects, and regretting having left the West Indies. The sky was cloudless; all at once a most elegant female figure, with a dark head-dress and black shoes, the rest of her dress of the purest white, passed before me, her left to my front. Her gait was at once graceful and majestic; she glided over the tops of the bushes; I was so surprised that I had not the power to challenge, but continued to gaze earnestly on all her movements in silence. After passing to a short distance from me, she turned, and descending the gentle sloping bank to a hollow, that lay between me and the river, disap-

peared from my sight. I wondered much who she could be, as no human being could pass our lines unseen. Not being in the least afraid, I walked down into the hollow to the next post, which was close to the castle, and inquired at Richard Clarke, who was there on duty, if he had seen or heard anything a few moments before; for it evidently passed just before his post. He replied, he had not. I made no mention to him of what I had seen, being afraid of being laughed at. What is also very strange, Clarke told me, that, after I left him, he became so much afraid that he trembled, and was very unhappy until he was relieved. I never saw any similar appearance at any other time during my stay here, though I looked anxiously for it, and would have been much pleased had my curiosity been gratified.

Another circumstance I must not omit before I leave Chatham; it made a great impression on me and all the troops. A poor fellow of the 9th regiment, said to be a farmer's son in Suffolk, had the misfortune to be found asleep on his post. General Sir J. Moore had the command of the Chatham division at the time; he was a

severe disciplinarian. The soldier was tried by a court-martial, and sentenced to be flogged; all the troops were paraded to witness the punishment. It was a very stormy morning; the frost, which had continued for some days, gave way during the night, and the wind and sleet drove most piteously: it was a severe punishment to stand clothed looking on, how much more so to be stripped to the waist, and tied up to the halberts. The soldier was a fine-looking lad, and bore an excellent character in his regiment; his officers were much interested in his behalf, and made great intercession for him to the General. But all their pleading was in vain; the General remained inflexible; and made a very long speech after the punishment, in which he reflected in very severe terms on the conduct of the officers and non-commissioned officers present, observing, that if they did their duty as strictly as they ought, the men would also do theirs; and if they had any regard for their men, they ought never to report them to him, for he would pardon no man when found guilty. The poor fellow got two hundred and twenty-nine lashes, but they were uncommonly severe. I saw the drum-major strike

a drummer to the ground for not using his strength sufficiently. General Sir John Moore was present all the time. At length, the surgeon interfered, the poor fellow's back was black as the darkest mahogany, and dreadfully swelled. The cats being too thick, they did not cut, which made the punishment the more severe. He was instantly taken down and carried to the hospital, where he died in eight days afterwards, his back having mortified. It was the cold I think that killed him ; for I have often seen seven hundred lashes inflicted, but I never saw a man's back so horrible to look upon.

We marched from Chatham to Gravesend, on the 7th of February, 1803 ;—and a very severe march we had, for it snowed all the way, with a high wind. We embarked on board the Walpole East-Indiaman, Captain Sandilands commander. And were sent down below to the orlop deck, in the midst of darkness, cold, and confusion ; but such a torrent of swearing, grumbling, and blasphemy, I did not think it possible for human beings to pour forth ; it made my very heart tremble within me, much as I had heard since my fatal en-

listment. During this long and tedious voyage, I was often afraid the wickedness and profanity that prevailed on board, would sink the ship, or bring some dreadful calamity upon us. The vessel was very much crowded, and we were packed together like negroes in the hold of a slave-ship ; and what made matters worse for us, our officers and non-commissioned officers were very strict as to our personal appearance, when it was our watch on deck. One comfort I enjoyed above my companions in suffering, was, that being so young I did not require to shave. The want of light, and the place being so much crowded, rendered this a very serious operation to the men, besides we were on short allowance of water. There were a good many cabin passengers on board, who were rioting in plenty of water and every luxury, but who looked upon us poor soldiers as if we had been animals of an inferior creation, and seemed afraid lest any of us should come near them. Keenly did I feel how low in the estimation of mankind I had fallen ; and bitterly did I lament my folly in leaving Carriacou.

At length, to our great joy, we came to an an-

chor in Madras roads, upon the 15th of June. We received orders to be trans-shipped next morning, and to sail immediately for Ceylon, as the war was at this time going on with the King of Candy.

We were put on board the *Dedinouse* frigate, still under the command of Captain Rogers. Captain P. Heywood, the captain of the frigate, had been a midshipman in the far-famed *Bounty*. He took little concern in the ship, leaving all to his first lieutenant, who was a very severe officer, and the crew were very low spirited and unhappy. We were told off in watches; he soon began to strike and knock about the soldiers, as he did his own sailors and marines. Complaints began to pour in to Captain Rogers every hour; but he told us he could not help it, as we were on board of a king's ship, under the command of her captain, and not under his, advising us to put up with it the best way we could, as it would soon be over. However, it became at length unbearable, so much so, that one day six of our men seized this tyrant lieutenant, and would have thrown him overboard, had not Corporal James Walker interfered,

who, with difficulty, rescued him, and, at the time, explained to him his Majesty's regulations respecting the army, that there was no such thing as striking or canes allowed, especially in the artillery. He walked aft to the quarter-deck, and never took any notice of the affair, nor beat any of us after this ;— his boatswain's mates and petty officers carried rope ends, and used them at their discretion. I have heard him call to them to use them, and they were constantly in play ; indeed, it was dreadful to see the manner in which these poor men were beat, both sailors and marines. His speaking trumpet was the weapon he used ; one day a great hulking fellow of ours, went to Captain Rogers, and said, " Sir, please your honour, the lieutenant has beat me with his speaking horn." " D—— the speaking horn," replied Rogers, " I can get no rest for it night nor day ;" he went and remonstrated with the lieutenant but it did no good until the threat of throwing him overboard put a stop to it.

We arrived at Trincomalee on the 22d June, 1803, and were all landed the next day, and walked about the garrison until the evening, when we

marched to a cantonment outside, and began doing garrison duty and drill, morning and evening, at small arms, and the garrison guns. We had a park on the esplanade outside, for mortar practice.

CHAPTER III.

Adventures and treatment in Ceylon.—Manners and customs of the Inhabitants.—Return to Britain.

AT the period of our landing in Ceylon, the Hon. Frederick North was governor of the island, and Major-General Macdowal, commander of the forces. The garrison of Trincomalee, consisting of the 19th regiment of foot, together with a Malay regiment, commanded by Major Davie, with the Coast and Bombay artillery, had marched up into the country, on the 3d of February, before we landed, leaving in the garrison just as many men as did the duty. The 19th, the Malay regiment, and artillery, were joined to the troops from Colombo, and Point de

Galle, which formed the invading army against the King of Candy. General Macdowal and the senior officers were soon forced to leave the army, on account of sickness, so that the command devolved upon Major Davie. The monsoon had commenced ; the most unfavourable accounts were brought to us every day, carried by the straggling Malays and Coolies from the army ; and the wailings and agitation of the Malay women were excessive.

In a few days afterwards, a Corporal George Barnsley arrived dreadfully wounded at Fort Macdowal, a temporary fortress between Trincomalee and Candy. He brought the unwelcome information, that the British army had surrendered to the enemy on the 25th June, that Major Davie and his officers had been separated from the men, when a general massacre had commenced. Barnsley himself had been cut down, severely wounded in several places, and left for dead on the field of carnage, and had with difficulty been enabled to crawl to the fortress, with the information. Captain Madge who commanded there evacuated the place that night, leaving his lamps burning, his baggage and the

sick behind him ; and arrived safe at Trincomalee. These dreadful tidings created the greatest consternation throughout the whole colony. The first night after their arrival it was impossible to sleep, the howlings and wailings of the native women were so truly dreadful.

About this time, Captain Colebroke, brigademajor, sailed with his company, the commanding officer and staff, for Colombo, the head-quarters of the island; and Captain Worsley and his company sailed to Point de Galle. Captain Rogers, although the senior captain, was left with us at Trincomalee, the worst station on the whole island. This was a most unfortunate thing for his company, and I felt it in all its force; for by this arrangement I was cut off from all hopes of promotion, being so far from head-quarters as to have no opportunity of being noticed. As I said formerly, the officers of artillery under whom I had the fortune, or rather misfortune to serve, never made it their study to know their men individually; and Captain Rogers, though he knew them by name, still, like all the others, communicated with them only through the medium of his non-commis-

sioned officers, who, jealous of all who had more information than themselves, very often gave unfavourable reports. It was my fortune to be disliked, for I could neither fawn nor flatter. Sergeant Sambridge, and Bombardier George Lang, my open and professed enemies, had given him the most unfavourable character of me; they had represented me as mutinous and dissatisfied, negligent of duty, and very slovenly. This, however, I did not find out until a circumstance happened, to be afterwards related, which discovered all, though too late to be of any service to me.

As soon as the other two companies sailed, we were moved into the garrison. My spirits, which a delusive hope had buoyed up, now sunk into settled gloom; the captain was for ever swearing at me in the most pointed manner; and Sambridge and Lang did all in their power to harass and get me punished. As an instance of the ways in which one man can sink another in the army in the eyes of his officers, I shall only mention the following:—

One morning, at ten o'clock, the company was

turned out in a hurry to go on fatigue; one of the men, who was late in falling in, came and took his place on my right, squeezing me off to the left. I asked him why he did so? Sergeant Sambridge looked at me, and called out, "Silence, you Alexander, what are you grumbling at? d—— you, you were always a d—— grumbling, good-for-nothing article." I simply replied, "I am not, grumbling;" and for this he confined me for insolence, grumbling and talking in the ranks; this as my crime was reported to Captain Rogers. Bombardier G. Lang, who was then acting as sergeant-major, came to me in a vain pompous manner in his official capacity, and asked me my crime, as he had to make it out in his morning report. "I replied I did not know, but that Sergeant Sambridge would inform him." Soon after Captain Rogers came slowly down to the guard-room, and calling me out, began to swear and bluster at me, saying he would cheerfully break his umbrella over my head, were it not that I was not worth the expense of a new one; adding, that he knew me to be a d—— mutinous little rascal; and if I did not make

an ample apology to Sergeant Sambridge, he would have me tried by a drum-head court-martial, and flogged on the spot.

The climate, and the great fatigue, but more especially the food, had begun to tell upon me and others in a fearful manner. The garrison of Trincomalee, when we arrived, was very much out of order; and Captain Rogers being an active officer, whose whole mind was bent on the good of the service, we were very actively employed, dragging and mounting the guns, carrying powder, and piling shot and shells. At this time I was so weak that it was with great difficulty I could carry a barrel of powder, and as for a barrel of ball-cartridges, that was quite beyond my power. These were borne by the Goliahs of the company, who prided themselves upon their size and muscular powers; the smaller men, such as myself, being for ever the butt of their jests, taunts, and grumbling, because, as they said, we received as much pay as them, and could do nothing. I was thus in the very lowest esteem both with men and officers, for Captain Rogers was a great admirer of large and powerful men, and it was only such he promoted.

In Fort Ostneburg, a neighbouring fortress, a Dutch mile between flag-staff and flag-staff from Trincomalee, there was a small detachment of the Company's artillery, the principal body of which had gone to Candy, which detachment Captain Rogers now took under his command. A detachment of the 34th regiment came from the coast in consequence of the war, along with a battalion of the Bengal, and another of the Madras sepoy. The 34th were stationed in the garrison, and the sepoy on the esplanade, in cantonments at the place we left. Fort Ostneburg was garrisoned by the Europeans and Malays, who were relieved monthly from Trincomalee, and sometimes weekly, in consequence of a very severe monsoon which prevailed at this time. As the barracks were old and bad, a great many of the European soldiers were dreadfully cut up in their health, with ulcerous sores, and swellings of the legs and thighs; this marching backwards and forwards with arms, accoutrements, and knapsacks, was worse for them than a longer stay would have been. Yet it was done for the best; but in this climate nothing is worse for men, with the few comforts a soldier possesses, than severe

fatigue ; and this marching was seriously so, the roads being not only wet and bad, but the Fort situated upon the top of a very steep hill.

From the depression of mind I then lay under, but more especially from the miserable diet we got, I became extremely ill. I was never free from an inveterate flux and other troubles ; our food was not only bad in itself, but cooked by the black cooks belonging to the garrison, in the most dirty and careless manner ; and we, being strangers in the country, could not alter their slovenly fashions. When the meat was brought to the cooking place, it was thrown down upon a dirty mat, and chopped up, then the cooks sat down upon their hams, placing a knife between their toes, and cut it up into small pieces ; and thus daubed all about, and without being even washed, it was boiled in curry, the rice being boiled at the same time in another earthen vessel called a chattie, as all their boiling is done in earthen vessels, and then brought into the barracks at twelve o'clock, when the soldiers gathered round them, like as many voracious hounds, with their chatties in their hands, bawl-

ing, blaspheming, and grumbling, not so much at the quality as the quantity of their food.

At night we got what was called supper, which consisted of a small cake made of rice flour and water, and a liquid called coffee, although there was not a single grain of the berry in it. What we used for sugar was called jaggery,* which was made up in cakes, very insipid and dirty; it bore no resemblance to the sugar used in Europe. At eight o'clock in the morning, we got breakfast brought to us in the same manner; it consisted of the same cake, fish, or bullock's liver, and jaggery water, and this formed the daily diet of the British troops in Ceylon. Had it been of good quality, and properly cooked, it was well enough; our allowance of liquor, which was arrack, was one quart per day to five men, or about two drams to each.

The beef, of which we had a pound per day, was given out along with the rice in the morning, for which sixpence per day was kept off our pay. But

* Jaggery, a coarse kind of sugar made in Ceylon from the cocoa-nut.

it was rather carrion than beef. The cattle, sometimes buffaloes, sometimes bullocks, having been used in their husbandry, were generally lean, old, or diseased ; the meat was soft, flabby, and full of membranous skin ; it had a rank, heavy, loathsome, odour, was offensive to both sight and smell, and hurt me more than the climate, and was, I am certain, the cause of much of the disease and death which thinned our numbers. The rice, too, was small, and of a bad quality, full of dust and dirt, from which our rascally cooks were at no trouble to free it.

The war with Candy, which was then raging in full vigour, cut off all intercourse with the interior of the country, where there was plenty of every thing, in the rich and fertile valleys.

The liver complaint, which is the scourge of man in this island, is also destructive to the inferior animals. I have often seen the wild hogs and cows, fat and plump, (which were shot by the soldiers of the 19th regiment, on an expedition up the country,) with the maggots coming out of their mouths when they dropped ; and, when we opened their bodies, we found their livers quite rotten and de-

cayed; yet, to our astonishment, their flesh was good and sweet.

As soon as Corporal George Barnsley, of the 19th regiment, who had escaped the general massacre of the army, became convalescent, and was walking about, he applied to me to write out a journal of his adventures for him; the outlines of which were these.

BARNSLEY'S NARRATIVE.

Before the period in which the command devolved upon Major Davie of the Malay corps, the whole troops had been quite worn out by sickness and fatigue. The weather was dreadful; for three days the rain had poured incessant torrents; and the army were in full retreat, on the faith of a convention made with the treacherous natives. When they arrived on the banks of the Maliva-gonga, which the rains had swollen to a great height, a few of the sick who had been left under the care of the natives, joined the retreating army, with the horrible information, that the Candians had commenced killing these poor helpless men,

and that it was with difficulty they had escaped. This threw a damp over the minds of the whole army, who were busily preparing rafts to cross the river. When they were ready, some of the native troops swam across with the warps; and so far all was right, and they still had hope of escaping, when suddenly the rascally natives cut the tow lines before their eyes. Many of them had already deserted to the enemy, whom Barnsley saw firing upon the English, in their own uniform. As soon as this act of treachery was perpetrated, all hope fled, as the enemy began to make their appearance on the opposite side to oppose the passage. Soon after the Adigar came down to Major Davie, with a proposal for him to deliver up Mootoo Saumy, (the lawful king who had been crowned at Candy, while General Macdowal was there,) to the Candians, and the army would be assisted to cross the river and get guides down to Trincomalee. Mootoo Saumy delivered up his sword to Major Davie. Both of them shed tears at parting. The night was spent in great anxiety, but next day there was no effort made by the Candians to enable them to cross the river, nor any appearance of it. In this

state of suspense, the Adigar came again, and proposed that the British should deliver up their arms, as it would be easier for them in marching, and the Candians would be more at their ease in conducting them. This insidious proposal startled Major Davie and his officers, when a council of war was called. At the same time, two or three of the oldest soldiers of the 19th waited respectfully upon the Major, and requested that they might be allowed to hold a council at the same time by themselves, which was refused. Unfortunately, it was agreed by the council to comply; the men reluctantly obeyed with loud murmurs, and some of the more ardent spirits boldly called out not to do it. The unfortunate Major, whose mind was in a dreadful agony, gave the word, "Ground your arms," then recalled it for a short time, during which he destroyed all his papers. At length the fatal act was done, and the troops marched to a distance from their arms, and halted, when the Europeans were separated from the native troops. Then the officers were likewise separated from the privates, and Corporal Barnsley saw them no more.

They were then marched to a greater distance

from their arms, and halted, when the Candians came close up to them, staring in their faces, and demanding their clothes and other little articles. One of them seized the neckcloth of an Irish lad, one of the 19th, and began to pull it; he knocked him down at his feet. They stood thus some time exposed to insult, when an Adigar came running down to them, and immediately two Candians seized the two men on the right, and led them out of sight, and soon after returned for two more. This was repeated several times, before the unfortunate victims began to suspect the dreadful work that was going on. They were stupified with horror; yet many were collected. One instance Barnsley often mentioned,—as they were leading off two of their victims, one of them who had ten pagodas wrapped in a rag, took them out of his pocket and threw them into the bush. At length it came to poor Barnsley's turn, who, more dead than alive, passively walked to the fatal spot strewn with the bodies of his countrymen. The executioners, with their large swords, chopped their victims down; the sword fell upon the back of his neck, his head fell upon his breast, the sinews of his neck were cut

through ; he got but one chop and became deprived of all sensation. When his recollection returned, the groans of the poor wretches were dreadful. When he opened his eyes, he saw several of the natives with gin-gaul or wall-pieces, stalking over the heaps of slain, beating every one on the head whether life was extinct or not. During this sight of horror, he lay as still as death, receiving only one blow on the head, which again deprived him of sensation. When this butchery was complete, they began to strip the dead. He was himself stripped during his unconsciousness, and upon his return to recollection, there was only his shirt upon his body, which was a very bad one, or it had gone with the rest.

The next recollection he had was of a great shouting and tumult. He attempted to rise, but his head fell forward upon his breast. Anxious to know the cause, yet fearful of being observed by the barbarians, he rose on all-fours, and supporting his head with his left hand, he could distinctly see a great concourse of them, as if assembled round some object of curiosity, those on the outside jumping up, stretching their necks as

if to gain a sight of something that was going on in the centre. At this time he distinctly heard pistol shots, and supposed it was the English officers shooting themselves, as they had their pistols concealed when the arms were delivered up; besides, he had heard some of his own officers say, they would shoot themselves, rather than be chopped down, if they saw no other alternative. This happened in the dusk of the evening. As soon as it was dark, he crawled into the bushes which were close at hand, and, in the best manner he could, made for the brink of the river, which was at no great distance; yet it was a toilsome journey to him.

When daylight came he saw a Candian busy cutting up the raft. The river had fallen much, for the rain had ceased. As soon as he perceived the Candian, he went more to the right to be out of his view. When he came to the banks again, he found the river too wide for him at this place; and, recollecting having seen a bend in it where the stream was not so broad, he urged his painful course towards it, supporting his head with one hand under his chin, and the other under his elbow to aid it. Here he plunged in, swimming with his right arm,

and holding his head out of the water with his left. In the middle of the stream he had nearly perished: the current was so strong it hurried him along with it; to prevent which he had, in desperation, to use both arms, when his head fell under the water, and he was nearly suffocated. Again he raised it; the strength of the current was passed, and he reached the opposite bank in a very exhausted state, where he lay for some time, with part of his body in the river, and his breast and arms upon its banks. Anxious to get as far as possible from the scene of his suffering, and conscious of his exposed situation, he made an effort to rise, and with horror saw a Candian, on the top of the bank upon which he had landed, gazing at him. Concealment was now out of his power; his resolution was at once taken, and he advanced boldly towards the Candian, who retreated in terror to a small distance. The poor corporal made signs for him to give him his mat to cover him, as the Candian shewed no hostility nor wish to do him harm, and the rain had again set in. At length the Candian took it off, and held it out upon the end of his staff, saying "po, po," (go.) He accordingly

wrapped it round him, and made the best of his way in the direction of Fort Macdowal.

Shortly after he came to a level part of the country, where there were a great many foot marks, for the ground was very soft on account of the rain. His wound pained him much, and his head ached dreadfully from the blow he had got with the gun. Much as the rain incommoded him, he was pleased at its continuance, for it was a great means of effecting his escape, the Candians seldom leaving their huts in wet weather.

Towards evening he came to a tract of rising land, where he found a deserted house, which wanted the roof. Here he took up his abode, and passed a night of the most acute suffering. The rain poured down upon him in torrents; his wound felt as if a red hot iron lay on it, and almost drove him to despair; the night appeared to him an age; and though he wished anxiously for day, he knew not when it arrived what was to be his fate; but any thing was preferable to the agony he suffered from his wound, which the inclemency of the weather now irritated more keenly than he could almost endure.

As soon as daylight came, he examined the house in vain for some article or other that might be of use to him. At last he went out and gathered a few leaves; their properties were unknown to him, but they were to cool his wound. He then tore up his shirt and dressed it for the first time, in the best manner he could, and then began to descend towards his left, and shortly after saw smoke rising out from among some trees. Cautiously approaching the spot, and peeping over the bushes, he saw a number of Indians, a savage race who live by rapine and murder, and are said to be cannibals. They are tributary to the King of Candy, and get from him a reward for every white man they can kill. He silently withdrew, and again began to ascend to the top of the height he had left. The opposite side was so steep and slippery that he was under the necessity of sliding down on his breech. The country became again more level, and was interspersed with wood. Here he met a boy carrying two bundles of fire-wood, on a slip of bamboo, over his shoulder, who immediately on seeing him dropped his load, and fled to the bushes. He took no notice, but hurried on, weary and faint from his

wound and hunger. Thus he proceeded, concealing himself in the best manner he could, until he met two men and a boy, who stopped him, and began to converse amongst themselves, often pointing to him. He knew not what they conversed about, but made all the signs he could think of to obtain their pity. At length one of them gave him a small cake of their country black bread. He put it to his lips, but was unable to open his mouth, not having the power of his jaws, (it was long after before he could chew his food;) he broke it off in small pieces, and in vain attempted to swallow a little. At length they made signs for him to follow them, and made no motion as if they were going to do him any injury. He walked with them for a considerable time; at length they came to some houses, where there were a good many native soldiers, and he was put into a back apartment of one of them. Soon after one of their chiefs came to him, and made signs to him to prostrate himself upon the ground before him, which he did. The chief then departed, and soon after a quantity of excellent curry and rice was brought him. With much trou-

ble and pain he eat some of it,—the swallowing it constituting his greatest difficulty.

The tom-toms were then beat, and the army collected in a short time to the number of about five thousand men and boys. Having placed him in the centre, they moved on in a crowd, in silence, without any appearance of military order, all crowding round and staring at him. At this moment his mind was in great agitation, being unconscious what was to be his fate. At length they came to a pagoda, (a saumah house,) and he now thought his doom was fixed, and that he had been brought there to be sacrificed to their god. To his great relief however, they passed on, leaving him in as great uncertainty as ever, what was to be his fate. At length his agitation became so great that his mind grew confused, and he walked onward almost unconsciously, until they came in sight of Fort Macdowal when they halted. Fort Macdowal is 16 miles from Candy, on the road to Trincomalee.

The chief then came up to him, and caused a gin-gaul piece to be brought and placed to his

shoulder, ready cocked. He did not know the meaning of all this, but thought they meant him to fight against the English, or they would put him to death. He was going to pull the trigger as a signal that he would do any thing they commanded, when the chief, who was an old man, caused it to be taken from him, and smiled. After a great deal of dumb shew, with the assistance of some of the natives who spoke the Malabar language, of which he knew a little, he was made to understand that the chief wished the English to come out of Fort Macdowal and fight him in the open ground. When he saw that Barnsley understood what he meant, he was allowed to proceed, along with two of the natives, to deliver his message, and they conducted him to the bottom of the hill where the Fort stood. As soon as they came near it, they said *po, po*, and left him, happy to be out of their hands. At his near approach, the sentinel was struck with terror at his emaciated figure and ghastly look; he was conducted to Captain Madge, commander of the Fortress at the time, who was thunderstruck at his appearance, and the melancholy tidings he bore. The first words he said,

was, "The troops in Candy are all dished, your honour." Captain Madge, in astonishment, required an explanation, which was too easily given, when he immediately ordered the guns to be spiked, and arrangements made for evacuating the Fort, which was done about ten o'clock, after the moon had sunk behind the hills. All the sick were left to the mercy of the enemy, who had already shewn that they had none. The lamps were left burning, and the march was commenced in silence; this, however, was soon discovered, and those of the sick who were most able, followed the line of march until they dropped. Poor Barnsley, after having his ghastly wound dressed by the surgeon, marched on, supporting his head by his hands, as he had done all along, and arrived, with those who were able to keep up, on the Cottiar shore where the man-of-war boats were stationed, who took them on board and brought them to Trincomalee, which they reached on the 3d July.

Corporal George Barnsley, soon after his recovery and return to duty, was made a sergeant; but in a few months after, having got a little in liquor on the barrack-guard of the cantonment,

he was tried by a court-martial, and reduced to the ranks, and did duty as a private until the year 1805, when he was sent home invalided, along with others, to England. Upon my return from Ceylon in 1811, while at Glasgow, I learned that he was at that time doing duty in Fort George, in the veteran battalion; since that time I have heard nothing of him.

To this interesting narrative I have only to add, that there were many stories current at this time concerning the march of the Trincomalee division. One in particular, which the men of the 19th, who returned from Fort Macdowal, confirmed, and the men who remained constantly asserted, was, that the day on which they marched was remarkably stormy and wet, and became so unusually dark and cloudy, that the like had been seldom seen. But what was still more remarkable, all the dogs in the town howled after them, and as they advanced, they were greeted by the howling of the dogs of the different places they came to, several of them following a long way howling. One dog in particular followed them until he was killed,

often running in front of them and stopping to howl. He was different times beaten by the men, and left for dead ; even the officers took notice of him, and said, “ can none of you despatch that dog ? ” but he always revived, though he was at last killed by a single kick.

To return to my own narrative. I had been only six months in the country, when I became so very ill that I was obliged to go to the hospital, where I remained for two months. During this time I suffered much, and I foolishly left it before I was completely recovered, as I could not endure the taunts of my fellow-soldiers ; for every man was considered as skulking, to escape from duty, who had not death visibly painted in his face.

My disease was an inveterate flux, the prime cause of which was the unwholesome diet, before described. This severe and loathsome trouble I was never altogether free from, during my whole stay on the island. The surgeon of the hospital had but two specifics for all diseases, and on them he alone relied : Glauber salts for flux, which I had taken for the two months I remained under his

care ; and mercury for the liver and other complaints ; thus salts and mercury were in requisition morning, noon, and night.

The duties were very severe, and my weakness was excessive ; my spine pained me much, my legs often trembled under me, I could scarce walk erect, yet I was enabled, by my unbending spirit, rather to suffer bodily pain than illiberal taunts. I thus began to endeavour to cure myself, and took the nostrums of every one who offered his advice, until there was scarce a thing that ever had done another good I did not try in vain. I even scraped and eat the rust of old iron, and paid much money to the native doctors for their trash.

At length I discovered that the only thing that did me any good was the guava fruit, which relieved the pain. This I had to pay the natives to get for me, as we were not allowed to leave the garrison without a written pass ; and even then when we went among the natives it was not without danger, for they took every opportunity to abuse and insult us, using the most irritating language, and often even spitting in the faces of the poor soldiers, who became as much afraid of them as of

their own officers and non-commissioned officers. Often has the blood boiled in my veins at the degrading scenes I witnessed. These low offscourings of humanity, as I will shortly shew, soon perceived the manner in which the British soldiers were treated ; scarce a day passed in which some of them were not tied up and flogged for the most trivial fault. This was at once a cause of astonishment and heartfelt satisfaction to these wretches, for they hated us as the invaders of their country.

Very different had it been in the time of the Dutch, when, if even a chief entered the garrison, he was forced to leave his sandals at the main-guard, and lift his turban to a common man. The Dutch soldier commanded fear and respect wherever he appeared, as the Dutch people there often told me ; and they wondered much at the policy of our officers, for, after all, we were not better loved, nor nearly so well obeyed as the Dutch had been.

Nothing appeared to give the natives more pleasure than to get the European soldiers flogged ; and innumerable were the devices they fell upon to accomplish this. They had even their young children trained to ensnare us ; and I had once a very narrow

escape myself from the superior art of one of these baby impostors. I had been down to the Pettah (village) Bazaar, when a young urchin came repeatedly in before me, as if he wished to make me fall. I gently pushed him aside, when he fell to the ground, and counterfeited death, in a manner that completely astonished me. Four or five fellows, who had been secretly watching his motions, now came running up, and, taking the child in their arms, began first abusing me, and then carried him off towards the garrison. I was greatly alarmed, for I knew the consequence of a court-martial, where they would swear I had beat and injured the child; and I knew all my assertions to the contrary would go for nothing. At this moment of anxiety and distress, a Portuguese, who had witnessed the whole transaction, came to me, and said, "Be not afraid, Englishman, I saw it all." He then began to abuse the natives in their own language, when they became less bold. I requested him, if a court-martial was held on me, to come forward and give his evidence, which he cheerfully promised to do; but I heard no more of this unpleasant affair. I had good reason to be afraid, for James Barlow,

one of our men, had a short time before been tied to the wheel of a six pounder, and got five hundred lashes, for beating an abandoned woman of the country, who, with her associates, had robbed and maltreated him. He afterwards declared solemnly to me, that he did not beat the woman ; yet she appeared, as was their custom, with large patches of a substance like cow dung spread on different parts of her body, which she and her associates declared were bruises and sores inflicted by him. Yet so reckless were the officers, and so regardless of their men, that I never recollect of an instance at one of the courts-martial, where the surgeon or any other ever offered to clean the part said to be injured, to examine whether the injury was real or feigned. Thus they continued their wicked devices without fear of detection ; and thus did the British soldiers, half-a-dozen of whom, with the greatest ease, could have swept the village of these cowardly villains, stand in fear even of their children. As an instance that the firm hand ought to have been held over them, one evening, at a little distance from the barrier-guard, I met a Malabar running up to the garrison with a bayonet in his hand, and

a young lad, one of the 66th, running after him, who in an agony of fear requested me to stop the Malabar, who had snatched his bayonet from him, and was going to charge him with an assault. My spirit rose, I snatched it out of the scoundrel's hand, and at one blow felled him to the ground, delivering it back to the soldier. The Malabar slowly arose, and walked away muttering, and there was no more of it. Had I not done this, the poor fellow had got, through this wretched pagan, three or four hundred lashes, and been thus disgraced for ever. That he was innocent I have not the smallest doubt, for an English soldier was so cautious of even jostling them on the common road, lest they should fall down and affect to be maimed, that he even made way for a native to pass, as if he had been one of his own officers. Often, when I saw their wicked ways, have I fervently wished that I had their dingy hides in the West Indies.

While they behaved thus to the private soldiers, ("Woolicurrah," an epithet too foul to be translated, was the name they gave them,) they were all cringing and the most abject humility to our officers.

In their dealings they were the most arrant and

barefaced cheats, swindlers, and thieves in the world, insulting and abusing you at the same time. After getting a bill from any of our men, often would they retire as if for the change, and return so completely disguised they could not be known, when their neighbour accomplices would assist them in getting quit of the injured party, and defend them, saying, “ Where one a soldier man get a money? he no got a plenty money.”

The women of Trincomalee are filthy and indolent, obscene in their language, and utterly void of modesty or chastity. The men are impudent and unabashed at any crime in which they are detected. Morality is at so low an ebb among them, that it is melancholy even for soldiers to think on it. They are divided into tribes or castes, all bearing enmity to each other; every one calling and thinking his own caste the best. There are Moors, Malabars, Cingleses, &c.; but they are in my opinion all cast or rather out-casts alike, in wickedness, depravity, and hatred to Europeans. The Portuguese at Trincomalee are only the dregs of the old Portuguese, quite degenerated in their language and colour. They are

very proud and poor, which they strive all in their power to conceal. The Moors are the safest to deal with; the Malabars the worst. The Portuguese and Cingleses are the most cleanly in their persons and food, all using their right hands only in feeding themselves, their left being counted unclean. Some of the merchants are extremely rich, but never enjoy their wealth in outward shew, or any extra expense, except gambling and cock-fighting, of which they are so fond that they will for days continue at it, staking large sums of money; and will often quarrel and fight—if pulling hair, calling names, and spitting in each other's faces can be called fighting. In the Pettah I have often seen such scenes. Their women are also very iracible, quarrelling in the most open and indecent manner with each other. When enraged, they throw dust up in the air above their heads, cursing and defying each other, lifting their clothes, void of shame, and slapping the lower part of their belly with their hands, as a mark of their contempt, unconcerned at the crowd of gazers. In the market I have often turned with disgust from such scenes.

With regard to their religion I know very little, being a stranger to their language. The Moors were Mahomedans, and the most trust-worthy of all the natives.

The Malabars and Cingleses are mostly pagans, although some of them profess the Roman Catholic religion, much mixed, however, with pagan superstition. The only place of worship for the Christians was a handsome chapel belonging to the Portuguese. There was no form of worship in the garrison for the European soldiers ; no distinction of days was kept amongst them ; Sunday and Saturday were all one, until Captain Napier came to us, and established a morning parade for divine service on the Sabbath, when he himself read prayers to us. But even then the garrison was a sink of sin and profaneness. The natives here burn their dead, and all more or less rub the ashes, which are white, upon their bodies and foreheads. There was a rock, called the Saumah rock, a little below the highest point in the garrison where the flag-staff stands ; it overlooked the sea, and jutted in. This rock was held by one sect as highly sacred, it being the dwelling-place of their Saumah or god. It

was said the kings of Candy had worshipped here, before they were forced into the interior, and hemmed in from the coast. We had a barrack built near it, which had given great offence to their priest; and to please him, the spot where he performed his ceremonies had been railed in, to prevent the European soldiers from disturbing their god. There was often religious worship performed here, not every day, nor every week, the times being quite irregular, sometimes in the forenoon, but oftener in the evening. The priest, a young man of a solemn, grim-looking cast of countenance, came to the spot, attended by a crowd of men, women, and children, all of whom kept at a respectful distance from him. He walked up to the brink of the precipice, and commenced his ceremonies; he had round cakes as if knead with his fingers, and hollow, in which were lights and incense burning. What they were made of I never knew, as we were not allowed to approach; he went through a great number of antic gestures with them, taking them up from the ground and laying them down again, just like a child at play with his toys, and ringing a bell, during which time his followers were groaning and

beating their bodies with their hands upon their thighs, breasts, back, and faces. After going through their ceremonies, the priest would go and look anxiously over the rock to the sea for some time ; then all at once give notice that the god was visible, when he, with great force of gesticulation, threw down a few cocoa-nuts, dashing them to pieces near the spot, where the said Saumah appeared. Then his followers approached and threw their offerings over to him, which consisted of pice, (a small copper coin,) rice, and other things, according to their ability, while those who were so poor as to have nothing to offer, sat at a distance, beating their breasts, and bewailing with tears their hard fate in being unworthy to get a sight of their god. I often stood to the end of their ceremonies. Once I sat with my feet hanging over the brink commanding a sight of the spot, where the priest and his followers said he was, but neither I nor my comrades could see any thing. At one time I saw what I took to be the ordination of a priest. They were engaged from about noon until four o'clock in the afternoon before they were done, when the priest of the rock delivered a book, consisting of

a few leaves strung together, to the other, a melancholy-looking young man, and thus concluded the ceremonies, which were much the same as usual. There were about one thousand natives present on this occasion. The priest wore a turban and sandals, and had a cloth round his middle, but was otherwise naked.

There was a pagoda at a little distance west from Black town, in a thick wood of cocoa-nut trees, which we could see from the garrison. The worshippers here were not of the same persuasion as the Saumah rock followers. What their belief was I know not, but the place was dark and gloomy. They would allow no European to enter it, but I understood that the walls were covered with carvings of crocodiles and other hideous monsters. Their priests were a gloomy, ferocious-looking set of men, well adapted to this frightful den of odious superstition. At particular seasons we could hear their tom-toms and trumpets sounding from the garrison, day and night without intermission.

The assertion is untrue which I have both heard and read, that no religion persecutes but the Christian; for here the enmity between sects is as great

as it possibly can be. One day the Lascars made a procession in honour of their religion, but as soon as they went beyond their own lines the Malays insulted and attacked them. Cutlasses and cresses were instantly drawn, much blood was shed, and it was with great difficulty this religious tumult was quelled by the officers; after this the Lascars and Malays, in their processions, were not allowed to go beyond their own lines. I am sorry to acknowledge, but the truth compels me to say, that the European soldiers, men and officers, were the only human beings who had no appearance of religion about them, nor any fears of a future state. It was indeed lamentable, for, in the beginning of the year 1804, a dreadful mortality commenced among us, and continued the greater part of that year. We often buried one and two a-day. Men who had the appearance of health, and who were altogether fearless of the manner in which they were living, went to the hospital, and in a day or two afterwards were carried out to be buried; yet nothing could be a warning to us. It was amongst the large and stout men, those who used to boast of their strength and muscular powers, that the greatest mortality prevailed.

The diseases most prevalent among us were the dysentery, liver complaint, and the berry-berry,* inflammations of the stomach and bowels, and fevers. Death comes so suddenly here, I have seen a man at a funeral party one evening, and himself buried the next; and women and children who belonged to the soldiers dying in the same manner. In fact, the mortality was so great, and our duties so severe at this time, that we were often obliged to get assistance from the 19th regiment in the melancholy office of burying the dead. What confirms me in the opinion that the hard duty and unwholesome diet was in a great measure the cause of the sickness, is, that none of our officers died or were sick; their diet was well cooked and good, and they were neither exposed to the weather nor fatigue.

Having lost a great many of our non-commissioned officers during this mortality, promotions took place to fill up the vacancies, in which I was

* The berry-berry is a species of dropsy, incurable when it reaches the body, but often removed while in the legs or feet where it first commences.

passed over by the means of Bombardier George Lang, acting sergeant-major, who had misrepresented me to Captain Rogers. Several soldiers younger than myself were made lance, or acting bombardiers, who, besides being worthless in character, could not write out their guard reports, I often being obliged to do it for them. Even Lang wrote and spelled so wretchedly that I was often obliged to officiate for him. It was envy that made him strive to keep me out of sight. Thus seeing that there was no way in my power by which I could distinguish myself, and forced to associate with men to whose habits I could not assimilate myself, I at length gave way to despair. I had repeatedly written to Europe to my father, in the most humble and supplicating terms, not to buy me off, but for his interest and aid in procuring me a commission, which I knew he could have done for one word of his mouth. But post after post came, and every one received letters but myself. It was noticed by the men that I wrote two letters for their one, and yet I was the only one who never received an answer. I felt the truth of this remark severely; my mind was fairly broken down, and indeed I cannot now think of this

period of my life without a sensation of the utmost horror and disgust.

I now became quite regardless of myself, and took to drinking as far as it was safe; the dread of the halberts or gun-wheel, alone kept me within any bounds, for I was resolved I should never be punished in this disgraceful manner and survive. To this my mind was fully made up. I had sunk low enough already, without having a felon's mark imprinted on my shoulders. At times I would be sullen and taciturn for weeks; this fit again would be succeeded by my breaking out into rhapsodies of blasphemy and profaneness too shocking even to recollect. In fact, I resembled more a ferocious beast untamed in his cage, than a human being. My comrades perhaps swore from bad habit and thoughtlessness; I from the real bitterness of a spirit dissatisfied with itself, the world, and all around it. Towards the end of the year 1804, Captain Rogers had the misfortune to lose his wife and two children, when he obtained leave from Lieutenant-General Wemyss, commander of the forces, to return to Europe on leave of absence. Just at this time there were many garrison and

general orders issued out, and Bombardier Lang, acting as sergeant-major and standing orderly, having none to apply to but me, I copied them in for him. This I had done for two days, and on the third there being a very long general order from Columbo, after I had copied it into the orderly-book, I carried it to Lang. The Captain being then in the garrison, looked at the book, and immediately inquired, "Who has written the orders these last three days? What strange hand is this?" Lang replied, "It is Alexander's." No sooner was the answer given than he dashed the book to the ground, and broke out into one of his usual rhapsodies of swearing, abusing Lang and Sambridge for the length of time they had deceived him by false reports of me, and would have struck him with a whip he had in his hand, had Lang not kept out of his way. At length he grew more calm, and said, "You d——d rascal, I never knew that lad was fit for any thing, from the manner in which you reported him to me; if he can write and spell in this manner, he can do many other things as well or better; but I now see the cause of your malice, you have been recommending men to me who do

not know great B from a chest of drawers." I cannot, for shame's sake, repeat all that he said in my favour ; but he swore, that if ever he returned, and I was alive, he would do all in his power to make me amends for the bad usage I had had through the false colours in which I had been represented to him. Unfortunately for me, however, he died in Madras ; thus my evil fortune again assailed me, just when I began to emerge from obscurity. In a few days after, he embarked on board a man-of-war for Madras with his remaining daughter Catharine ; and I saw him for the last time at the sally-port gate. The command at his departure devolved upon the 1st Lieutenant, Charles George Alms, for the space of six months, until the arrival of Captain C. F. Napier from Columbo, to assume the command of the artillery in the district of Trincomalee. Lieutenant Alms had been in the company from its formation in 1800, though he knew not the names of half-a-dozen of the men even in the year 1810, when I left Trincomalee.

Lang, the first thing he did, waited upon Lieutenant Alms, and requested me to be taken off duty to act as clerk, and he would be standing orderly

still, which was granted. This, though no sinecure to me, got me much ill will from the men; besides the labour, I had to furnish paper, pens, and ink at my own expense, at the same time that I had neither the respect nor indulgence of a non-commissioned officer. The only advantage I had, and it was great, I had no other duty to do, while those who were able to walk, had only two nights in bed a-week. My health was still extremely bad, and not being relieved from their society, I was still a private soldier, and suffered much from their low abuse. I was a dictionary man, and they did not like dictionary men. I was a skulk and proud, and a good-for-nothing thing, a poor looking article, &c.

My clerkship continued but a short time, so that I was again in my old situation. Conscious that it was the food that hurt me, another soldier and myself applied to Alms for leave to be out of the barrack mess; even this small favour was refused by him in a rude and insulting manner. This was the effects of the misrepresentations I had all along laboured under; although Bombardier Lang was now dead, the evil he had done stuck by me. The or-

derly, as clerk, had the tapal (post-office) department added to his duties, which was too much for him, so that I was retained as his assistant, or I must have died, I was still so ill.

The near approach of death quelled the perturbation of my mind ; I became indifferent to worldly objects, and for a time turned my thoughts to a future state ; there was no one to converse with me on this subject, in the heartfelt and serious manner I wished. As I said before, the only place of Christian worship, was the Roman Catholic chapel in the Pettah, where I, as often as I could, went, happy to be in a place where the name of Jesus was honoured, however corruptly it might be done, they having introduced a few of the pagan forms.

In truth, the garrison more resembled a congregation of evil spirits, than men who would seek your life if you said they were not Christians. The officers led the van in this revolt against all appearance of religion. Sunday and Saturday were all alike for playing at billiards, chess, backgammon, cards, or cricket. There were balls too, the band playing often all the night ; while the common soldiers were dying so fast, we had to get assistance

to bury them. No attention was paid to any of the old or new burying grounds of the Dutch or Portuguese, two of which were inside of the garrison, where many an old and valuable officer was laid low, both Dutch and English; at last, the old Dutch church and other buildings in the garrison became temporary playhouses and fives-courts, and, last of all, were converted into store-rooms; the flat grave-stones and parts of coffins were torn up, to the surprise, grief, and detestation of the Dutch, some of whom shed tears upon the occasion, and all wondered what kind of people the British were, on this and many other accounts. Even our own burying place at the centre eastern extremity of the esplanade close to the Pettah, at this time almost hourly in use, was equally neglected; no European looked after it, the black people, pariah dogs, and cows, or any animal, passed all over it without molestation; and the bones were torn up and lying all about, as if we made a joke of death. At times, a weak temporary paling would be put up, but as the ground was soft, especially in wet weather, it soon fell down, and again remained neglected for a length of time.

The only place of worship for the British in Ceylon was at Columbo, with one chaplain. It was the same as if there was but one in Edinburgh for all Scotland. Thus the poor neglected soldier was suffered to die without the shadow of spiritual comfort, or a word about it; and then carried out and buried, with prayers hurriedly read over him by an officer; the troops sometimes fired over his grave, and at other times not.

Although they thought not of an hereafter, their minds were all on the alert as to the present; besides their letters to their wives and relations in Europe, I wrote their wills for them. It was will for will,—that is, I leave you all I possess, and you do the same by me, called tye for tye, (alluding to the manner we wore our hair,) thus, while they acknowledged the precarious tenure by which life is held in this fatal climate, yet every week they became more and more depraved.

When Captain Napier arrived from Columbo, I was ordered once more for duty; and the young non-commissioned officers to take the orders themselves, to improve in this part of their duty. After this I was of no farther use to Sergeant Hunter, the clerk, who cared no more for me. I was then ordered

on command to Fort Ostneburg, where I wrote the narrative for Corporal George Barnsley, already given. Soon after I went to Fort Ostneburg, a detachment of artillery and part of the 19th, with Malays and sepoy, were sent to Batacolo; they went by sea to the Cotiar shore, then marched to that little place, and instantly set off for the capital of Candy, under the command of Captain Johnstone of the 19th, leaving in Batacolo as many as garrisoned the fortress. This little army, including officers and native troops, did not exceed 300 men. The artillery had only their hangers and light field ordnance. At the same time the army left Trincomalee, another marched from Columbo, in order to arrive at Candy, about the same period, by order of General Wemyss, commander of the forces, between whom and the governor, the Hon. Fred. North, there unfortunately was a violent misunderstanding, so much so, that it was evident even to the common soldiers. This, but for excellent management, would have caused the Batacolo division of the army to suffer the same fate as the troops under the unfortunate Major Davie; for the expedition was countermanded after

this division had marched. Captain Johnstone, being a brave and enterprising officer, pushed on with the utmost despatch, in order to reach the capital first. So rapid were his movements, that the tapal sent after him was unable to overtake the army, until they were too far into the country; he being afraid to follow, returned, so that Captain Johnstone had no knowledge of what had taken place. To the great joy of Captain Johnstone and his army, they reached the capital in safety without opposition, and found it deserted. All they saw was a little boy weeping, a woman, over whose fate humanity forces me to draw a veil, and a white rat. The poor boy was allowed to escape, the rat was taken prisoner,—Captain Johnstone was so much pleased with it, he resolved to have great care taken of it, as he meant to have it carried home to Ireland, as a present for his mother; but flushed with success, one of the 19th wantonly exclaimed, “All flesh is grass,” and killed it, for which the captain confined him,—but his confinement was of short duration.

Not in the least alarmed at not finding any of the other divisions before them, but rather rejoicing,

anticipating the glorious advantage they would have in plundering as soon as the others appeared, they anxiously looked for their arrival to begin. At length some of the 19th who had been in the capital before, and were partly acquainted with the place, discovered some arrack in the Palace, placed there by the troops of the former expedition, and left in their hurried retreat. The discoverers, forgetting their situation, abandoned themselves to it; the drunkenness was spreading fast before the officers perceived and put a stop to it. Still there was no appearance of the arrival of any of the expected divisions, while the enemy were collecting in great numbers upon the adjacent hills. At their first appearance, joy ran through the little army; they were taken for friends, being clothed in the arms and dress of the men they had formerly butchered; but the spyglass soon made known what they were; the red coats covered black skins. Still averse, in their desperate circumstances, to be undeceived, they were taken for our own native troops; but the tardiness of their approach, and the fearful increase of their numbers, too soon dispelled this last hope. Unable to account for the delay of

the other divisions, which ought to have been up before this time, a dreadful anxiety took place of their former exultation. The Candians were still collecting in immense numbers, and gradually approaching to commence the attack,—a whole kingdom against 300 men. No tongue can express the feelings of intense anxiety that took possession of the little army ; the recollection of the last massacre rushed on their minds ; the cry ran through the ranks, “A massacre, a massacre, a second massacre ; we are sold, we are sold,—General Wemyss has sold us,—North has sold us,—we cannot retreat, it is of no use to try it, let us remain where we are and fight to the last man.” The whole town resounded with their cries ; horror and despair were in every man’s face ; all was confusion, until Captain Johnstone collecting his troops around him, and lifting up his arms to heaven, exclaimed, “I am innocent, I am innocent of every thing,—I neither know the cause nor any design in this, for if you are sold, I am also sold ; but let us not despair, for while we have our arms and life, there is hope ; but to remain here is certain death ; it is the same as if we were to turn our arms against each other, and

die by our own hands." Then to tranquillize the minds of the men, he pulled out his instructions and read them over. He then shewed where he concealed them on his person, that in the event of his being killed they might not be lost. This being done, he coolly and seriously recommended an immediate retreat, strictly enjoining order and regularity, together with obedience to orders, and above all, silence, keeping close together, and waiting for each other, and on no account to separate; as if the front were heedlessly to push on, the rear must be separated from it, and both become an easy prey to the enemy. "Men," he cried, "be careful of your ammunition, do not heedlessly fire it away, or allow it to be damaged, for on that depends our safety; remember the massacre of our countrymen two years ago, whose bones we passed over the other day, and have again to pass over. To avoid such a sad fate, be firm, be cool, and upon all occasions obedient to orders, and we shall yet reach our countrymen in safety."

Just at this time, old Sergeant Simpson of the artillery, who was of a dogmatical and careless turn of mind, in the middle of this confusion, had,

through negligence, allowed fire to be somehow introduced among some live carcasses which were lying strewed about, by which he himself was severely wounded in the breech, one of the 19th killed, and several others more or less hurt. The circumstances of the times did not admit of any inquiry to punish the defaulters, but it was a severe misfortune, as Captain Johnstone truly said, "One white face at this time was worth an hundred at any other;" as the enemy did not hesitate to attack the native troops, but were always inspired with terror at the sight of the Europeans.

Every moment's delay only served to increase the danger, as the enemy could be seen thickening on every side. The little army was completely surrounded by overwhelming numbers. The wounded were placed in doolies, (a common kind of palanquin for carrying the sick,) and borne on the shoulders of the Coolies, (natives employed as pioneers to carry burdens or do any hard work.) All being thus arranged, the retreat commenced, and the small army moved down towards the river, keeping as close together as possible. In this order they soon passed over the ground where the bones of their

unfortunate countrymen lay whitening in the sun, unburied skulls and thigh bones mixed together. This sight of horror had a most powerful effect upon the men in their present circumstances, when the same fate appeared almost inevitable for themselves ; it added firmness to their resolution, never to submit or lay down their arms to such an enemy, but to die fighting, or suffer any famine or fatigue, rather than be butchered in cold blood by their cowardly foe, whose fears for a white face only allowed them to live for an hour, so overwhelming were their numbers.

As soon as they came to the side of the river, where Major Davie had before in vain attempted to cross, two rafts were made, during which time, an attack was made from both sides of the river. The shouts and howlings of the enemy even drowned the report of their gin-gaul pieces ; repeatedly they attempted to cut the warps without success ; the little band succeeded in repassing the river, in which was sunk their little ordnance ; the soldiers abandoned their knapsacks, and the officers their baggage ; wines, spirits, and provisions, all were destroyed ; they reserved only their arms

ammunition, doolies, ration arrack, and the tents, every thing else was sacrificed to lighten the men and facilitate the retreat.

The enemy gave every obstruction in their power, and did all they could to impede their progress; they seemed inspired with tenfold fury, at the success of the troops in crossing the river—a general rush was made upon them from all quarters—the cries were if possible redoubled—every effort was made in vain to overwhelm this handful of men. After a severe struggle, the enemy at length retired—and a short breathing time was thus bravely earned—and onwards they moved, melancholy and harassed, but determined in spirit.

How different did this rich and fertile country appear in the advance from what it now did in the retreat! In the one the high and craggy rocks, the stately palm, and cocoa-nut trees, the lofty timber, and rich fields of rice, were all objects of admiration; now that every tree or rock concealed a lurking foe, they were objects of distrust. In many places the roads were so narrow the army had no other way to march than in Indian file, that is rank entire; they had wound along these roads in the advance, with

pleasure and admiration, flushed with the hopes of victory and success, now they were the sources of their greatest uneasiness. As the word of command to the troops was given with difficulty, silence being so necessary, it was passed along in a whisper from front to rear, from man to man; besides, they were more exposed to the enemy, who lost no opportunity of annoying them; every tree and bush seemed to send forth fire; the attacks upon the rear were incessant, while the native troops, at every approach of the enemy, rushed in amongst the whites; they seemed panic-struck—fear and dismay were evident in their dingy faces—and well it might, for the Candians rushed upon them with ferocious rage, inspired by the direst hatred; but as soon as half-a-dozen of whites formed, they in their turn fled equally dismayed.

When night came the troops had not even then one moment to repose, but sat with their arms in melancholy silence, while the hills and woods re-echoed the yells of the foe; their awful howlings and terrific shouts, during the darkness of the night, were truly appalling—even then the fire was kept up upon the little army.

Next morning the toilsome march again commenced; it was with difficulty the front could be restrained in their advance, so anxious were all for their own individual safety, unmindful of the consequence either to themselves or their comrades. They had often to be halted until the rear came up, for these were obliged to face about and repel the enemy. The poor sepoy were so intimidated, that Captain Johnstone placed them in the centre, the Europeans being in the van and the Malays in the rear. These last, although men of small stature, are lively, bold, and active; but they were so often overpowered, that a good many Europeans had to be mixed among them, which rendered them more steady, and dismayed the enemy. Still their assaults were incessant, especially in the passes and defiles of the mountains, where they rolled down huge masses of rock upon the line of march, and had felled large trees across the path, the very branches of which were larger than the trees in Europe.

The army had a small quantity of salt beef with them, the rest of their provisions they were forced to forage for; but this was not difficult, for the wild

hogs and buffaloes were plentiful, and sweet to eat. Salt was their great want. Troops of elephants often crossed their path. All the animals they killed, though fat and fair, were more or less diseased in the liver.

Through the dreadful obstructions thrown in their way, and the incessant attacks of the enemy, it was found impossible to carry on the sick and wounded; these, along with the Coolies, fell all into the hands of the enemy; many were taken, their hands and feet bound, their mouths stuffed with grass to prevent their cries, slung upon a bamboo pole, and thus borne off to be butchered like sheep. When the army had occasion to stop, however shortly, numbers, secured in this manner, were recovered by their comrades, when missed in time, by a hasty charge with their bayonets.

In this melancholy march they made but little progress; their fatigue was great; many became diseased in their bowels, others foot-sore; all were weak and spent; some so much so that they became unfit to carry their arms. Orders were given for such to take their muskets to pieces, and throw one part of the lock in one place, another in a different,

and to break the stock and ramrod, that they might be of no use to the enemy. Thus every thing was conducted in the best manner, but no man threw away his arms while he was able to drag them along, and many poor fellows were to be seen with the muzzle in their hands, and the butts trailing on the ground, loath to part with their only safety; but their distresses came thick upon them in this cursed climate, which fatigue never fails to aggravate.

As the distress increased, discipline became more and more lax, and the men often refused to obey their officers. This was the case amongst the white troops, the stoutest of whom were much inclined to separate and urge on right forward, every one only taken up with himself. To stop this destructive tendency in the men required the utmost efforts of the officers, as the non-commissioned officers were as bad as the private men, more especially a Sergeant Baird of the 19th. At one period they fairly refused to obey command, replying to their officers--What is the use of our stopping to be lost for a few? They turned a deaf ear to those in the rear, and the affecting appeals of their officers, who every now and then placed themselves in front, calling out,

“ My God ! my God !—Stop men—do stop.—Will you not obey command ? if you do not we must all inevitably perish, the front as well as the rear ;” while Captain Johnstone was almost drove to distraction by their refractory conduct. It was only by reasoning and arguing the point that any thing was done even for the safety of all.

At length they arrived in a small plain of a square form, where a simultaneous attack was made upon them, from the woods on every side. It was like any thing but a battle such as is usually fought, for the enemy still concealed themselves behind the trees, which were quite close to the open space, but not extremely thick. Here there was some opportunity of retaliation : all was now the most prompt obedience to every order. Their chiefs and even the men were seen flitting amongst the trees ; no rash and inconsiderate fire was kept up by the little band, but as soon as a white turban was seen, two or three muskets were levelled at it—a great many of them fell ; formerly the muskets were only pointed to where the smoke came from, now the aim was the man himself. This so intimidated the enemy that they never ventured out upon the

British. Two of their chiefs fell, when they immediately ceased firing, and there was an interval of rest.

A very melancholy scene took place here : Lieutenant Vincent, of the grenadier company of the 19th, received a shot in the groin ; it had been rather spent ; he walked on with the others until the blood was coming out over the top of his boot at the knee ; at length he became quite faint, and was put into a doolie ; and also Ensign Smith, who was struck on the breast with a spent ball, which knocked him down. They were sent off by a bye-road, under the care of the guides, with instructions to join again upon the route.

When poor Vincent was struck, he exclaimed, “ I have caught—I have caught it, men !” All were grieved for him ; he begged and implored some of his men to remain beside him, and he would reward them handsomely, as he was well able to do. His appeals were vain, the danger was so manifest none would comply. At length he addressed himself to one of his own grenadiers, offering him as a recompense £500, and his discharge, or whatever he wished he would do for him. To these tempting

offers the poor fellow turned a deaf ear ; at length he said, " I will go with you—stand by you—live or die with you ; but it is not your reward that makes me do so ; it is pity for you, and the love I bear you ; all the world would not otherwise induce me to do so. I will share your fate come what will, but it is for love alone." They moved off ; Lieutenant Vincent held a penknife open in his hand, resolved not to fall alive into the hands of the enemy.

All was confusion and altercation about what road they should take. Some were for one route, some for another ; some had the folly to call for a council of war, though all that their situation required was implicit and ready obedience to their officers ; small as their numbers were, Captain Johnstone could not be omnipresent ; his exertions were truly wonderful, and the other officers did all that men could do.

But their misery still continued to increase as their strength became exhausted ; and the Coolies, who bore the sick and wounded, sunk under their loads. To ease them the doolies were thrown away, and blankets slung on bamboos substituted. The

weather was extremely hot during the day, excepting when it rained; and the nights and mornings were very cold. This brought on agues, which afflicted almost all the Europeans. Water was also extremely scarce, and in general bad when it could be got, being no better than stagnant puddles, used by the wild beasts of these forests.

Still fighting and struggling on, they came to that place where they should have found the three men and the Coolies, they having been sent a nearer and safer way; but, alas! they never were heard of; their fate may easily be conceived. Still in hopes that they had gone on, the army proceeded. To add perplexity to their sufferings, the sun became so obscured by clouds they did not see it for some days. Hitherto, their course, which lay due east, for Trincomalee, had been guided by it, now they became completely bewildered; the guides, over whom a strict and jealous watch was kept, had either lost their way, or pretended they had done so; they repeatedly had to climb to the tops of the loftiest trees to look about them.

Captain Johnstone, in this dilemma, had recourse to the whip; he tied up the guides to the trees

and flogged them, to make them look sharper. At length the rain began to pour in torrents ; it was extremely cold ; this, under God, proved the means of their safety, for the Candians soon after gave up the pursuit, as they cannot stand the rain and cold. And thus they at length reached Trincomalee, cold, wet, dirty, and lousy ; almost naked, many barefoot and maimed ; officers and all were alike starved and shrivelled, their countenances haggard, forming an assemblage of the most miserable looking men it is possible to conceive. All had to go to the hospital, on their arrival ; their strength appeared only to have endured to this point, then to have utterly deserted them. Indeed this retreat was as fatal to the men as the massacre had been, for almost all died in the hospital ; few, very few, survived.

The sensation this unfortunate expedition made was very great ; there was much murmuring and blame for the fate of Lieutenant Vincent and Ensign Smith. Two trials arose out of it ; there was a firm determination to punish some one, and, in these cases, the saddle is not always placed upon the right horse.

A Sergeant Henry Craven of the 19th was turned out of the hospital, to the main-guard, and cured there ; then tried by a court-martial for cowardice, in skulking behind a tree during the action, and for laughing at one of these officers when he was wounded. Poor Craven stoutly declared his innocence ; the evidence was not very distinct, yet he was sentenced to be transported as a felon for the term of his natural life, to Botany Bay, and remained long in the main-guard a prisoner. He was at length sent on board his Majesty's ship *Bel-liquieux*, 64 guns, then lying at Trincomalee, to be a sweeper, where he only lived eighteen months, and died of grief ; while there was not one word of Sergeant Baird, who behaved so openly bad in encouraging the men to urge forward, he being in front.

The other trial was that of Lieutenant Virgo, of the Malay Regiment, now the first Ceylon. Respecting the two officers, he was treated with great asperity by the officers of the 19th, and was hardly dealt with in his trial. He was sentenced to be suspended from rank and pay for six calendar

months, although he was wounded and lost an eye on the retreat.

Captain Johnstone afterwards removed to Columbo ; and being likewise censured by his brother officers, he applied for a general court-martial, and was honourably acquitted. There were a great many excursions into the enemy's country ; none went so far during my stay, or suffered anything like this :—but all the talk soon died away.

Shortly after this, the East India Company's native troops, and the detachment of the 34th, returned to the coast. The Company's native troops were the prettiest regiments I ever saw under arms ; all tall and well-proportioned men, well-featured, of a light bronze colour, natives of Delhi. They were well-conducted, moral, honest, and sober ; the most faithful of troops upon duty—in every respect superior to the Europeans in these points.

These men had more pay than the King's forces ; their white officers were like princes, compared with the officers of the British army, having more ease of mind, and pleasure in their men. From the nature of their caste, upon which they valued them-

selves much, they made no use of spirituous liquors, so that there was rarely any punishment among them, nor were any of them ever tied up, like brutes, to be flayed alive. They rejoiced much at their departure from this wretched Trincomalee.

This was the only instance in which I ever saw the foolish ideas of soldiers realised, which I had formed ere I unfortunately became involved past recall with them. I have often looked upon these soldiers with admiration, while my mind insensibly wandered back to the times of the Greeks and Romans, whom I conceived to be men such as these were ; and with pain I confessed the inferiority of our men in moral principle. For, strange to tell, the longer the European troops remained in this wretched place, which I may call the gates of death and hell, the more immoral and depraved they became. The triangles were every day in use ; there was a continual flogging. The West Indies was nothing to it ; neither before nor since have I seen such unfeeling severity used to the very worst-disposed slaves, as to these poor unfortunate soldiers of the 19th and 66th,—the officers appeared to take a pleasure in it ; one Major H—— never missed the

scene of suffering, and insulted the men. It may seem incredible, but it is a fact which hundreds can testify, that a dialogue, of nearly the following import, was repeated at almost every punishment in which he was concerned. Indeed he never was so jocular nor in such good humour as at a punishment; while the sentence was reading he would look at the prisoner and smile until the reading was over, then begin:—

Maj. Strip, sir, and pree the kail.

Sol. O, noble major, pardon me, pardon me!

Maj. Pree the kail, pree the kail—you must pree them.

Then commenced the punishment, not one lash being abated, during which he would jump about as if in ecstasy; when the poor wretch was taken down he would commence again:—

Maj. Are you much cut?—How's the kail?

Here a groan or two would escape as an answer.

Maj. How do you like them?—Are they sour or sweet?—Are they too salt?—How do you like the cook?

Then he would often ride off from the ground; while, if in cantonment, the unfortunate sufferer had

to dress, and walk to the hospital at Trincomalee to get cured. If he met the major, who often threw himself in the way,

Maj. Well, my man, where are you going?

Sol. To the hospital, sir.

Maj. What is the matter?

Sol. I was punished.

Maj. Who punished you?

Sol. Your honour.

Maj. Are you much cut?

And thus would he wound the feelings, as he had only a short time before torn the body.* Another Lieutenant-Colonel, who was short-sighted, stood close by the triangles, and used to call to the drummers and drum-major, “Cut—give it him—make it tell—do your duty—make it sound,” and so on. To so great a height was this carried, that many maimed themselves, or put a period to their wretched lives. It was scenes like these that made the con-

* For conduct such as this the 19th was moved round to Colombo, by order of General Maitland, where Major H—— soon after lost his commission.

trast so very striking between these Indian soldiers and the Europeans ; for at this time the 66th regiment were used more like condemned spirits than human beings : but I shall not harrow up the feelings of the reader further.

When Captain C. F. Napier assumed the command, the climate had made great havoc in the mental and bodily constitution of the men ; aided by their low habits and vices, they were falling fast into drunkenness, discontent, and all manner of military and moral irregularities. The Captain, who was a smart active man, of strict, sober, and moral principles, did all in his power to correct this falling off, by encouraging morality and virtue, and suppressing vice. He was scrupulous and faithful in the discharge of his duty, and ever watchful for the good of the service, as a commanding officer. When driven to the disagreeable necessity of resorting to corporal punishment, which was always the last alternative with him, he hesitated not to order it, but always stood at a little distance with his head downwards in silent melancholy ; and he has been seen even to shed tears on the occasion. He had recourse

to milder punishments, such as stopping the wet rations for a given time, extra guards, drills, and such like, with admonitions and reproofs.

At his arrival the artillery, over whom only he had any command, were in the custom of parading every Sunday morning for sea-bathing ; this parade he changed to the Saturdays, and adopted a church parade on Sunday mornings. After it he marched the men into the barracks, where they all sat down, while he stood up and read prayers in the most serious and edifying manner. This was never omitted, when his health would permit ; he did all in his power for the good of his men, but he had a strange medley to deal with. They were already too depraved, and in spite of his efforts their bad practices continued on the increase.

We got a reinforcement of a detachment from Woolwich, with three subaltern officers, to fill up the vacancies in the three companies. This detachment were all young men and of small stature, selected on purpose, us being best adapted for the climate. Almost all were bad characters from Woolwich, and the other commands in England, from all branches of the regiment. This was most

unfortunate for Captain Napier, for thus the home and the Ceylon vices were congregated in Trincomalee. Strict discipline and punishments became on the increase ; and, shocking to relate, the most evident calamities were made subjects of the most profane jests, and ribald attempts at wit. On the 7th January, 1805, Trincomalee was visited by a typhoon, which did incredible damage to the garrison. So severe was it that the very quoins were blown from under many of the guns to a distance, the sentry-boxes into the sea, trees rooted up, others stripped of their branches and leaves ; all the barracks were blown down, except those at Fort Ostneburg, which were built of stone and lime ; and they were unroofed.

Next morning it was melancholy to look abroad :—the Sheerness, 44 gun-ship, was forced upon a rock in the harbour, and never got off ; even this calamity, by which we suffered much, did not escape their jests, at which my heart sickened, such as “ If G— A—— were to see this morning what he has done last night, he would be ashamed of himself !” Alas ! among such men I had by my folly doomed myself to associate. At such times I

thought with the bitterest regret of the lost pleasures and sweet society of Carriacou. But of such men no more for the present,—perhaps indeed too much has already been said, for I feel the subject most heart-rending to myself; yet the history and fate of one of this detachment I must not pass over, as his story in too many points resembled my own.

His name was George Marsden, a native of Manchester, a gentleman by birth. His father was dead, but his mother and one sister were alive. Through some whim or frolic he had enlisted, but what was the cause he never told me, intimate as we were. He was very jocular and witty, with a command of language I have never heard excelled, expressing himself upon any topic with elegance and perspicuity. He abounded in anecdote, sung delightfully, and wrote a ready and beautiful hand. With all these accomplishments he was but an indifferent soldier; his mind was not in the ranks, it could not stoop to servility and monotonous duties. His heart and spirits like my own were completely broken down; he had no society or congeniality with the men, for he was disliked,

envied, and even abused by them, for these very qualifications by which he hoped to raise himself, as soon as they were known. He was forced to endure the same usage as myself: "Here is another dictionary man come out,—he'll not do much for us,—he'll not mount many guards for us; d—— all dictionary men, and quill drivers;" such low language and illiberal abuse, many may think they would despise, as it ought and can with ease be done while there is society to choose or be avoided; but it soon subdues even the strongest minds, when they are forced to eat, and sleep, and do all their duties with none other, and are borne down by every voice.

The difference early education makes on the after man was very striking between him and myself. I was stouter, older, and of a more fearless turn than he was; yet when they began their low abuse, he gave them battle, in which they had no chance, so ready were his answers and repartees. In a war of words he ever remained the conqueror; yet I have seen him in tears shortly after its conclusion. It was the reverse with me; I either heard all in silence or slunk away. I never could bring my

mind to a sturdy resistance, so deep was the impression my early sufferings had made upon it. When I was insulted, it was but a word and a blow, fearless of personal consequences. This was the only contest I could maintain where the mind had not to act.

But to proceed with poor George, who was during the time he lived, like myself, writing home to obtain a commission ; he got kind answers from his mother and sister, but there was none for me. At length his mind sunk under its sufferings, and he became dissipated. I mourned for and admonished him in vain ; it was like a vein of madness ; at times he would be all melancholy and tears, bewailing his fate, and his piety was heart-consoling and exemplary ; soon after he would break out into extravagance, and get into liquor ; then his bursts of profaneness and blasphemy were truly frightful. The other men all swore, but this sank into insignificance before his tremendous expressions ; he thus got himself often confined, and many of the minor punishments ; but Sergeant-major Collins, and Sergeant Walker, both good men, and the only non-commissioned officers in

Trincomalee who valued a man of education, though both ignorant themselves, either excused or begged him off, otherwise he must have been flogged and completely disgraced.

At length he was confined for a very trifle, through a plot laid for him by Sergeant Sambridge, who mortally hated any one that had any pretension to be more learned than himself. That evening, Sambridge came to the Saumah rock himself to superintend roll-call, a thing he seldom did. George was outside when he entered, and did not hear him give the word, " Silence, or I will confine the first man that speaks." Poor Marsden entered, and spoke ; he was immediately marched down to the regimental guard at the sally-port, at eight o'clock, in a dark night, and left. One night during his confinement, he requested Gunner George Northope, acting corporal of the guard, to allow him to go to the canteen, just for one glass of arrack, which he unfortunately granted, and poor George returned intoxicated, and lay down on the cot. One of his outrageous fits came on, and he began to talk aloud ; Northope, afraid of the consequence of allowing him to go, besought him to be quiet,

two or three times, in vain ; at length he went in a passion to him, took him in his arms like a child, threw him down on his cot, and left him. Marsden became still. When daylight came he was found dead and cold. Upon inquiry being made, it was ascertained that, about one in the morning, his chain was heard to rattle, as if he had been turning himself. Dr. Bath of the 66th, garrison surgeon, made some farther inquiry, shook his head, and so the catastrophe passed over. Captain Napier made a most suitable address to the men on this melancholy occasion, and thus terminated the earthly career of this gifted and unfortunate young man.

I felt what I cannot describe on the occasion. In the evening I saw him in perfect health—in the morning I was told he lay dead on his cot in the guard-room. It was to me as if I stood alone in the world—my only beloved friend had left me, no one remained who could sympathize in my sorrows, and feel them as I did ; yet I felt a sad comfort in thinking he was now past the danger of being flogged, and away from the snares he had not steadiness of mind to avoid. So often had he, through the malice of the non-commissioned

officers, been reported a prisoner, he could not longer have escaped. He was now free from that dreadful alternative to which we had both made up our minds ; for I had long resolved rather to put a period to my existence than submit to farther degradation.

I felt sinking fast under the fatigue and climate, both of which were aggravated by the diet, which did not agree with me. My confirmed flux, for which I had tried every remedy, both native and European, that I could obtain, brought on a weakness in my spine and thighs, so that walking was a burden to me, and I suffered great pain. In this dilemma the old soldiers of the 19th, advised me to take a native wife, who would cook for me, and purchase better food in the Pettah Bazaar than was used in the barrack-mess. Let misery be to what extent it may, I felt that when there is a choice, life is still sweet.

I had been refused leave to be out of the barrack-mess once before ; I applied to Captain Napier, who granted my request, as it was the custom in Columbo. The next step was for leave to erect a hut in the garrison, for which I applied to Lieutenant-

Colonel John Hatton, of the 66th, commandant, who granted it at once. I then set about getting my hut put up, which, after all, was not so good as the huts of the slaves in the West Indies, over whom I had formerly borne command. I then began to look about for a wife, or rather a nurse—love was out of the question. My affections were elsewhere all engrossed; but I must either take a wife or die.

My choice fell upon a Cinglese; she was of a clear bronze colour, smooth-skinned, healthy, and very cleanly in her person and manner of cooking, which was her chief recommendation. Puncheh was of a good or bad temper just as she had any object to gain, for ever crying out poverty, and always in want either of money or clothes. She imagined every person better off than herself; often pretended to be under the necessity to pawn her necklace and other ornaments, and boasted how much she was reduced since she came to live with me. Then she would pretend to be sick, and lie in bed for twenty-four hours together; and neither speak, nor take food or medicine, but lie and sulk. I

was completely sick of her at times, for she would not leave me, neither would she stay.

When these sullen fits came on, I in vain endeavoured to sooth or flatter her ; I had not money to satisfy her extravagance ; my victuals remained uncooked, and the hut in confusion. There was no alternative but to follow the example of the others. I applied the strap of my great-coat, which never failed to effect a cure, and all went on well for a time. She bore me a son, a fine little boy, who died young. Often have I sat and looked with delight upon his infant gambols. As is the custom here, he smoked cigars as soon as he could walk about. It was strange to see the infant puffing the smoke into the air, and forming circles with it, until weary, then running and placing his head upon his mother's bosom, to quench his thirst from her breast, before finishing his cigar.

What alone caused me to submit to her humours, was, that I now began to get stronger and better in my bowels, for my food was cleanly cooked and properly done. But I was not pleasantly situated, and many a melancholy hour's meditation I had by

her side, thinking on Elizabet and Carriacou ; however I was out of the barrack-room society.

This small improvement in my circumstances became an object of envy, and spiteful remark to the non-commissioned officers ; yet each might have had the same comforts for the asking ; but it is the nature of soldiers to find fault with each other, and to grumble. I must, however, hurry to get from Ceylon, where, in pain and disease, I spent the prime of my life for nought.

I had been made acting or lance bombardier by Captain Napier, a few months after his arrival at Trincomalee. For three years I did this duty, and ranked as a private, yet was a non-commissioned officer. Captain Napier, though commandant, had to write to Columbo for this small promotion, as all appointments were made at head-quarters, even a lance,—for here we were completely out of sight and mind. Several younger soldiers were appointed there, over me, during this period. At length, on the 8th July, 1808, I was made full bombardier ; and it was the veriest chance that I did not leave Ceylon a private, for at this time, a drum-boy, who had come out with us, and remain-

ed in Columbo, had got the appointment; but Captain Napier, who happened to be there at the time, firmly remonstrated, and strongly recommended me, shewing my seniority, and complaining that his company was overlooked and neglected at headquarters; by this means the drummer's appointment was cancelled and mine confirmed.

I only mention this to shew how precarious are the events in the army, that either keep a private soldier stationary or promote him. I received my appointment with cool indifference. I had long seen the folly of my romantic anticipations, and found there was not the smallest chance of their ever being realized by my own exertions. My hopes had long since all centred in my father; I was ever writing home to him, through his acquaintance, for I was forbid any direct intercourse: this was a privilege I had never enjoyed. Letter after letter arrived for every one but me. I thought my heart would break with grief and shame, for even the men remarked aloud that none wrote so often as I did, and yet every one received letters but myself.

Shortly after my appointment, a ray of hope

broke in upon my gloom, Sergeant Colquhoun informed me that Captain A. Alexander had come to Columbo to join the 19th regiment, and inquired if he was a relation of mine. I was confused at the suddenness of the information, which he perceiving, urged me to tell him if this captain was related to me. I unfortunately was prevailed upon to inform him that he was my father's full brother; but requested that he would not make it known amongst the men. He laughed at my scruples, saying it was an honour to me to have an uncle a captain. I said it would only get me more envy, as I knew their minds well; however, it was known to all the men in the course of the day. In a few days after, I made up my mind to write to him, to make myself known, and implore his influence in my behalf, to obtain a commission in any of the native or West India regiments, or his mediation with my father. With great care I wrote and took my letter to the tapal; but my evil genius again undid my hopes, for a roaring, foolish fellow, Sergeant M'Farlane, who was at this time acting as drum-major for the 19th regiment at Columbo, took my unfortunate com-

munication to the captain at parade, bawling out, before all his brother officers, "Captain Alexander, here is a letter for you from your nephew, Bombardier Alexander of the Royal Artillery." I had, as was the custom here, put my name on the back of it. He snatched it from his hand, saying, "What have I to do with bombardiers?" and tore it in pieces, stamping it under his feet. This circumstance I did not learn until I saw my uncle two years afterwards, when I was leaving the country. In the meantime I was a prey to the utmost anxiety for the fate of my letter; post after post came, still no answer. I never wrote again, for I knew it would be in vain. After a considerable lapse of time, I got a letter from Mrs. Alexander, the wife of my uncle, stating that her husband had gone to Travancore soon after he got my letter, and that since his return he had been very busy. The tenor of this answer was kind and humane, but held out no hope either of a reconciliation with my father, or of getting any commission for the luckless Alexander. The manner in which my letter had been delivered, I learned from some of our men who were in Columbo at that time.

My living out of the barracks with my black wife was the means, under Providence, of saving not only my own life but the lives of many others; by it I discovered a conspiracy formed by Hays and Weir, two of our own men, secretly to murder the non-commissioned officers of our company, hoping that by putting them to death they would, if they were not discovered, get their places. So ably was the plot laid, that they had every human probability of succeeding. These villains were tried and punished for their diabolical intentions.

Shortly afterwards, Lieutenant-Colonel Colebrooke wrote from Columbo, desiring a number of our black sheep to be sent to head-quarters, under command of a steady lance-bombardier; as a punishment, they were to be marched by land all the way, in full marching order, arms and kit. I was selected by Captain Alms, at which I was very happy, for I would then be at head-quarters, and I immediately began to prepare. My first concern was to send off Punckeh, my native wife, by sea before me, as the fatigue was too great for her. We parted with some concern, expecting to meet again, but I never saw her more; for our route was delayed from time

to time, and at length it was given up altogether. I continued to send money to her for a considerable time, until I heard from Columbo, by some of our men, that she had got another husband, when I broke off all correspondence with her.

But her departure forced me once more into the barrack-mess, and my health soon became as bad as ever. I sunk rapidly ; at length I was so extremely ill, I was forced to go to the hospital ; my liver was much affected ; I had besides a complication of diseases, and a most severe dysentery. I was so much reduced, that my life was long despaired of. But my youth carried me through, contrary to the expectations of myself and every one who saw me. In this extreme misery I was rendered completely unfit for service ; the medical board came to the hospital to visit me, and I was put down for Europe, a patient far beyond their skill.

I know not how it was, but from this period I felt as if a heavy oppressive sensation had left my mind. I gradually began to recover a little strength, yet my ailments continued not much abated. I was able to walk about and enjoy the sight of nature, and dream of the cool refreshing

breezes of Scotland, and of once more regaining the elasticity of health and buoyancy of strength which gives a sensation of pleasure to every movement. This is known only to those whose physical powers have been as long lost as mine had been, to whom every movement, even the slightest change of place, is attended with fatigue and pain ; then the mind acts only, the body is almost reduced to second infancy, fretting at one moment about trifles, and the next blushing at its own weakness ;—such was my condition at this crisis.

As soon as I began rather to crawl than walk about, I was assailed by the taunts of my old tormentors, “ I was scheming to get back to Europe,—why did I not return to my duty ?” For, strange to tell, I soon began to fill up in my person, and to get fat in appearance, though before this period I had been remarkably spare. I suffered all in silence ; it was vain to reason with such men. I was still so weak that my knees bent under the weight of my own body, and I was like to faint from fatigue if I walked a few hundred yards.

About this time a melancholy accident happened, which I shall state, as it serves to illustrate the cha-

racters of the men among whom I was so long. Two of them, Birch, a Yorkshire man, and Stormount, a Scotsman, had been for some time assisting the gunner of a war vessel in overhauling his powder. When the work was done, he gave them the sweepings to themselves, as powder is a very valuable commodity here. The natives making use of it in their religious ceremonies, were for ever importuning the soldiers for it. A hundred times they have in their whining cant addressed me, and solicited some, however small the quantity, saying they had a friend sick, and it would cure him. I have seen them flash a little by the patient's cot every now and then. Birch and Stormount having got a pass, were proceeding to the Pettah, to dispose of their cartridges, which they had concealed about their persons when passing the guards; they had between them from three to four pounds weight. Unfortunately there were from 30 to 40 natives seated round a fire on the way down; to these they offered to sell the powder; the greed of the natives proved their destruction, for they immediately formed the resolution to take it from the two men, and either keep it, or bring it and them back to

the garrison, to obtain the reward if it was found to be stolen. Birch stood by the fire making little resistance, he being a great soft fellow, but Stormount, though small of stature, was strong and active, and strove with them like a wild bull. Had Birch acted his part half as well, they would have got safe off. At length Stormount finding he must be overcome, for they began to throw ropes to noose him, as if they were catching a bullock, none daring to approach, so roughly had he handled those who had attempted to lay hands on him, all at once ceased to strive, and taking the two large cartridges out of his breast, tossed them right into the centre of the fire; in a moment they exploded, and scorched all around. Those in Birch's breast exploded at the same time, and dreadfully mangled him, and the crowd who had him their prisoner. Stormount had only his left eyebrow singed. Poor Birch walked back upon his own feet, the most pitiable sight I ever beheld; there were no clothes upon his body, his skin was black and of a dingy white, and large patches of it and the flesh hanging down like rags. No one knew him; he was taken for a

tattered native until he spake. He was carried to the hospital and died in great agony on the third day. A great many of the natives were also brought to the hospital in a dreadful state; almost all died; one woman, far-gone with child, had the infant blown out of her womb. The other soldiers all said that Birch's misfortune was a just judgment upon him, for his cruel and brutal disposition; for a little before this happened, more like a beast than a man, he had with his teeth bitten off the beak and claws of another soldier's game cock, which had beat his in a battle the day before, by which he had lost a bet. Gaming was one of the chief vices of the soldiers, and fostered all the others. It appeared strange to me that men should profess to acknowledge a retributive Providence, yet in all their actions set it at defiance;—my soul longed to be out from amongst them; my hopes were placed upon a personal interview with Captain Alexander, as my letter had failed. He was still at Columbo, and a favourable opportunity, as I thought, occurred shortly after I was invalided.

The small army, called the Ceylon brigade, which had been sent to the Continent to quell a

mutiny amongst the Company's officers, having returned, General Maitland came to Trincomalee along with his staff. The Ceylon brigade, and the troops in Trincomalee and Fort Ostneburg, got from him two days liberty and a public dinner; there were racing, wrestling, and pig-hunts, &c.; the soldiers being allowed their own humours in their amusements. In the general orders, General Maitland expressed his satisfaction at the behaviour of the Ceylon brigade during the expedition. Thinking the General's return a favourable opportunity to get to Columbo, and anxious to see my father's brother before I left Ceylon, I spoke to Dr. Riddle for leave to go round at this time, without telling him, through false shame, the object I had in view, lest I should be obliged to give a history of myself. The consequence was, that he refused, as there was a frigate looked for to arrive every day, in which I would be embarked for Europe direct. It never came, however; by which I was detained in this wretched place for six months longer, and did not leave it until the 31st of October, 1810, when I bade adieu to it for ever, with a sensation of joy I want words to express.

I embarked at Fort Ostneburg for Point de Galle, and sailed on the 1st November in the government brig Minerva, a grab, and was landed on the 5th. As soon as I landed, Sergeant Macfarlane came, and told me that my namesake, Captain Alexander, was there, with the command of a detachment of the 3d Ceylon regiment, having exchanged into it. I was very distant to him, on account of the foolish manner in which he had delivered my letter, having no doubt that it had failed of any effect through him. I was, however, very glad that my uncle was on the spot, and wished to be introduced to him ; but, as usual, I felt diffident and backward in the extreme. I let the time pass on for a few days vacillating in mind ; at one time I had wrought myself up to the proper pitch, but when the period arrived, my resolution always evaporated. His quarters were close to our barracks, and many an anxious glance I cast at them ; I often rose to go and introduce myself, but always shrunk from it ; such was the fear in which I had been brought up of my father and all his family. At length Fortune did for me what I wanted resolution to do for myself, for to suffer and not to act has always been my

chief fault, the result of my early education, when my infant struggles for redress had only plunged me into greater troubles.

One evening, as I was walking past his quarters, he called me up to him ; I obeyed with joy. He said to me, with kindness in his looks, " I see you are a stranger.—Where do you come from ?" I replied, Trincomalee. " That is not the purport of my question ; what countryman are you ?" I replied, a Scotsman ; but my heart told me I had no country—no one that cared for me. " From what part ?" I said, Glasgow ; he then looked earnestly in my face, and inquired my name ; it is Alexander Alexander, I said, and my heart beat so quick I could scarcely breathe ; for on his recognition of me my hopes were placed, but they were not of the same complexion they had been when I wrote to him. My constitution was completely broken down ; I felt that every week I remained in this country I was less able to contend with the climate ; I was gradually sinking into that state I had been in at the time I was invalided, yet I appeared full in my person, but my appetite was gone. At one time I was ruddy, with all the appearance of health, soon after

I would be of a yellow tinge, and again pale as death.

When he heard my name he did not appear surprised, but said, "You are the person who wrote to me from Trincomalee;" I replied, I was. He then said that Mr. Hay, the fort-major, had told him the day before, that a namesake of his, belonging to the artillery, had arrived, which was the reason of his calling me up to him. He now inquired if I really was the son of his brother; after some further conversation he left me, and returned with Mrs. A., who, in a friendly manner, addressed me by my name, and inquired how I did. After a little Captain A. asked her if I was like his brother. Mrs. A. replied, I was very like, but I looked much older than he—so great havoc had disease made upon me. I, at this time, was only in my 28th year, and my father in his 53d, yet I had all the appearance of advanced age. After some further conversation I left them, being invited to call again as I passed.

In a day or two afterwards I had a conversation of about two hours with them, in which Mrs. A. expressed her surprise and regret at my not making

myself known to them, at the different times I had seen them in Glasgow, Portsmouth, and Chatham. I also regretted it myself, but I could not help it, nor overcome my early impressions of dread for my father and his relation. In our conversation I mentioned the many letters I had written, yet received no answer to any of them. The captain expressed his surprise, and inquired into the purport of my letters ; I told him they were all requesting my father's interest to obtain a commission for me in the army, as I found I had been deceived in my hopes of ever obtaining one by my own exertions.

He immediately said it was wrong in me to wish for a commission, as I had been a private ; for under these circumstances I never could be happy nor respected in the army ; for I would be always liable to insults, and exposed to duels with my fellow officers ; and he pointed out as an instance a circumstance that happened at this very time on the island : Captain Brown, a young man about twenty years of age, had had some trifling argument with Captain Parker of the 2d Ceylon regiment, a man about forty, who had risen from the ranks ; the argument became a keen dispute, and Brown grew warm, call-

ed himself a gentleman, and said "What a pretty thing it is to be thus contradicted by a fellow, who the other day had been a private soldier in the ranks. This settled the dispute, as Parker left the room and challenged Brown. They met next morning, when Brown was shot dead the second round. Major Chaplin, commandant, put Parker, the surgeon, and the two seconds under arrest. General Maitland came to Point de Galle from Columbo in a day or two after the duel, and as Captain Parker was only acting captain, having then the command of a detachment of the 2d Ceylon regiment, General Maitland struck him off from his acting captaincy, and reduced him to his lieutenancy; and he remained with the other three prisoners under arrest until tried by the military or civil law after the Governor left the island, he being on the eve of embarking for Europe.

I replied to his remarks that such a circumstance might happen, but if it did, I would do as Parker had done, and run my chance of the consequences. After some further conversation, all tending in the strongest manner to dissuade me from thinking of a commission, we parted; as he was shy of my being

known to be long in his company, or coming often to him, on account of the difference of rank, lest it would be remarked by the other officers. Had I been his own father, he dared not be seen much in my company, having been taken to task for his familiarity with a deserving sergeant, while in Columbo; but both he and his lady requested me to call occasionally; and if I had any thing particular to communicate, to write to Mrs. Alexander.

I had been so much used to degradation since my enlistment, that I felt not half so keenly as I otherwise would have done a few years before. Yet I could not help anew feeling how much I had fallen since I left Carriacou, and I became doubly anxious for the period of my departure for Britain, that I might again recover my health, and see my father, who, I had no doubt, was by this time much softened in his anger, and would, when importuned in person, get me a commission.

In a few days after this, Captain Alexander again called me up to him as I passed, when to my astonishment I found his views, as far as regarded

my commission, completely changed; for at this interview he recommended me to stay on the island, and by no means to leave it; that through his interest with the governor, he would get me a commission in some of the native regiments; that he would be at the expense of my outfit, and I might repay him the cash when I could conveniently. I sincerely thanked him for his offered kindness; but said it had come too late, for I found it would be certain death for me to remain, as I was getting weaker every day, and less able to contend with my complication of diseases; besides that, I had made up my mind to return to Europe, having already suffered so much in that country. He replied I did not look so sickly as I said I was; and added, that a few months, after my appointment, I might get leave of absence and return to Europe for my health, which would be much more honourable for myself and agreeable to my father, than to return as a humble soldier. I felt the truth of his arguments, and acknowledged their force; yet I could not bring my mind to acquiesce in them; my wayward destiny urged me on; the same inexpressible feeling that

drove me from the West Indies, but acting differently, was at that period equally fatal to me; fortune was within my grasp, I was anxious to seize it, yet I let it escape through a dreamy hope in my father, and a feeling that I could not for any time survive if I remained in Ceylon. I was so weak that all exertion was a burden to me; yet I was full in my habit of body, rather inclining to be corpulent.

After a great deal of valuable advice, I still refused to remain; the last words he kindly said when I bade him farewell, to go to Columbo, was to weigh well my resolution before I left the island, as such an opportunity would never occur again. "Perhaps," said he, "you may change your mind in Columbo, which I hope you will. If you do, write me at once, for nothing will make me more happy than to serve you."

Point de Galle is a beautiful place compared with Trincomalee; it abounds with plantations of cocoa-nut and palm trees of a great height, bare of branches to the very top; yet the natives climb them with great facility. Money, provisions, and fruits, were plentiful; compared with Trincomalee

it was a paradise. The harbour is large and pretty, but by no means so safe as that of Trincomalee. The garrison is large, and the town looks well; there is a Dutch Protestant church, and there are a good many wealthy and respectable families; but being only one month here, and so sickly, I saw very little of it.

I arrived on the night of the 7th at Columbo; it was quite dark, yet I left the vessel with eagerness. There were a great many black wives and children belonging to the 19th on board, who kept up a continual noise of scolding and squalling; as the sailors, in the execution of their duty, often unavoidably trampled upon them. We were huddled together like sheep.

As soon as I landed, the invalids went to the barracks, while other two men and myself went to the hospital; for although I had taken the precaution to put on three great-coats, I had caught cold, and my salivation stopped. The other two men died soon after they entered; but I struggled through, and once more began to hope I would yet see Scotland.

I was anxious to have staid, but felt conscious I

must sink into a premature grave if I remained. Captain A. was so kind as again to write, advising me to stop, and he would at once apply to the governor. The 4th Ceylon regiment was at this time being organized ; I would have got appointed at once, had my health allowed me to remain. I returned an answer to the captain's kind letter, thanking him for all his goodness to me, but in a decisive manner said I felt it imperative on me to return. I felt that if these kind intentions towards me had been put into execution two years before, when I first wrote him, the result would have been far otherwise ; and I might as an officer never have been visited by that long and heavy sickness which had shaken my system to its very base, and threatened destruction to the whole. But enough of this, I am conscious there is too much of self ; I beg the reader to excuse me ; thus was a second opportunity of bettering my circumstances lost to me for ever.

One occurrence I witnessed here almost incredible : a Portuguese governor touched at Columbo, early in the year 1811 ; on the firing of the

salute, Gunner Richard Clark* was blown from the mouth of his gun right into the air, and alighted upon a rock at a considerable distance in the harbour, yet escaped without a bone being broken, almost unhurt. It was the most miraculous escape I ever witnessed; he was but an awkward soldier at the best; the gun of which he was No. 1, went off by accident, but not just at the time of loading, otherwise the left arm, or perhaps both arms, of No. 2 had been blown off, as No. 2 loads and rams home, along with No. 1. The gun was just loaded when she went off, through the negligence of Clark, in not spunging properly. He was not at his proper distance, like the other man, nor yet near enough to receive the whole flash. To the astonishment of every one, he was seen in the air, the sponge-staff grasped in his right hand, the rammerhead downwards, which first struck the rock as he alighted on his breech. The rock was very thickly covered with sea weed. A party was sent down to bring up the body, as all concluded him killed upon the spot; he was brought up only stunned and slightly singed,

* The same man who was on guard that night on which I saw the apparition of the lady at Upnor Castle.

and was at his duty again in a few days; while No. 5, who served the vent, had his thumb, with which the motion-hole is stopped during the loading, so severely burned, it was feared he must have lost it, and it was only saved by the skill of the surgeon.*

At length on the forenoon of the 15th of March 1811, I embarked on board the H. E. I. Company's ship] the Thomas Granville, having on board the Right Hon. Thomas Maitland, governor and commander-in-chief of Ceylon, with his staff, and many passengers. We sailed during the night, and touched at Point de Galle, on the afternoon of Sunday the 17th. Lieutenant-colonel Wilson, the then lieutenant-governor, accompanied us thus far, and

* To make the circumstance more plain to unmilitary readers, I shall state the duties of gunners in firing:—At all garrison guns, No. 1 sponges, No. 2 loads and rams home with No. 1; the odd numbers being always on the right of the gun, and the even on the left; No. 5 serves the vent, and No. 6 fires. In field pieces No. 7 sponges, No. 8 loads and rams home with No. 7, No. 9 serves the vent, and No. 10 fires. No. 1 does not begin to sponge until he sees the vent served; if he sees any remissness, he is allowed to strike or daub No. 5 with the sponge, which he dare not resent, No. 1 receiving credit for his activity. If the gun goes off in loading, the thumb is witness whether he did his duty or not, if it is burned he receives praise, if it is not he is punished. The thumb is sometimes so severely injured, that amputation is necessary.

went on shore a little before we sailed, to assume the command, General Maitland having retained it till then. That same night we sailed on our destination, and I bade a joyful adieu to that sickly island, upon which I had suffered so much ; yet with a feeling of regret that I could not remain and enjoy this second offer of good fortune. When Tantalus-like the cup was at my lip, I could not taste it. My only consolation was the hopes I had in my father, if I survived the voyage, or in any measure recovered my health. But, alas ! this is a blessing I have never yet enjoyed.

I was so sickly and dispirited during my stay in Columbo, that I may almost say I saw it not ; it is, however, a stirring and pretty place, in which are a good many Persian merchants, who bear an excellent character for industry and faithful dealing.

In the ship with me, there were eight invalids of the royal artillery, and detachments of the 19th, and other regiments, under the command of Major Macnab, (afterwards Lieutenant-colonel Macnab,) a most excellent officer, who had been in the army for 25 years. I was buoying up my mind with the hopes of having little to do, but to take as

much care of myself as I possibly could on the voyage, which to a common soldier is bad enough. I was again disappointed, for on the day after we sailed, Major Macnab called me to him and said, "Bombardier Alexander, I have been very particular in my inquiries as to the character of the invalids I am taking to England, and as I have got an excellent one of you from your officers, I have written out a detachment order appointing you sergeant-major of invalids for the passage. I am aware that your appointment will not be a very agreeable one, but do your duty, and I will support you." I sorrowfully retired, and having called them together, read my orders aloud. My sorrows then commenced, and continued unabated during this voyage, the greater part of which I was under the care of the ship's surgeon. Though not confined to my berth, I was for weeks scarce able to walk, yet was at the call of every officer in the ship, as the invalids were in duty bound to assist the crew; and poor Alexander was obliged to drive like an overseer these lazy half-discharged soldiers to the different places where they were required. The General being on board, Major

Macnab was anxious for their appearance on deck ; to keep them clean was one of my most severe tasks.

We lay off the Cape of Good Hope for eight days in a severe storm, during which we lost company of the Earl St. Vincent. We were all anxious about her safety, as she was an old vessel. On the 31st of May we reached St. Helena, where we remained until the 9th of June, a Sunday, when we sailed again with a large convoy, in company of the Bel-liqueux 64, and the frigate that had accompanied us from Ceylon. As we approached Europe, my hopes in my father's assistance became weakened. I resolved to petition General Maitland, and present my petition through Major Macnab, along with the letters of recommendation I had received from Captain Napier, and others of my officers ; but I was so harassed by my duties, and weighed down by sickness, that I unfortunately delayed from day to day, until arrangements were making for the General to go on board the Bel-liqueux, and to proceed for England, leaving the fleet. All I got done was to send a letter by her to my father, dated Woolwich. This letter I addressed to him direct, the

first I ever had ventured so to send in my life ; nor would I have dared at this time, but I knew not what to do, as none of my letters had ever been answered. Perhaps those to whom I had written were dead, and he had never received them ; for, agreeably to his strict injunction, they had always been directed to the care of a second person.

I could see hope and joy beam in the face of every one as he put his letter into the bag, which hung aft the wheel ; but I felt neither. A callousness, bordering upon despair, had possession of my mind, harassed and broken down as it now was. As sergeant-major, I was ever on the alert ; the calls for my personal exertion were incessant ; thus I lost my last prospect of succeeding in the object I had suffered so much to attain ; for had I, through Colonel Bridges and Major Macnab, presented my memorial, there was every chance of success, as they were both my kind friends, and knew me well ; but such was not my fortune.

In the afternoon, General Maitland left us ; a salute was fired, all sail crowded, and we were soon out of sight of each other. On the 5th of August we made the Lizard Point, and on the 12th

we were landed, when my disagreeable command over these lazy and refractory invalids ceased.

Upon my arrival at Woolwich, I waited upon the drum-major, but there was no answer to my letter. I requested him, if any letters came, not to forward them to Ceylon, as I had just arrived from thence ; but my fears were vain, no one cared about me—I stood alone in the world without a tie to bind me to it.

Until the medical board sat in October, the invalids had no duties to perform ; only to attend the morning and evening parades. Indeed, I was so weak it was with difficulty I walked about. I feel ashamed to speak so much of my bad health as I have done for these few pages past, but I am done. The sole reason I bore up, to the endangering of my life, was the utter aversion I had to be discharged, and thus to leave the army a private soldier. I felt a horror at being called a poor pensioner, a poor old soldier ; how could I, in such circumstances, hope to obtain Elizabeth, for my mind was ever in Carriacou, where all my hopes were centred.

To avoid the medical board, I got, by the sur-

geon's recommendation, a sick furlough to return to Scotland, as my native air, he thought, would soon restore me to a portion of my wonted vigour; and I embarked for Scotland a prey to hope and fear. When I arrived, I as usual stopped at the nearest inn, and sent a messenger to my father's house. But what a message from a son to a father! "That a gentleman wished to speak with him upon business." At length he came. Had he seen a spectre from the grave, he could not have been more disagreeably surprised; I could see that my presence was hateful to him; my heart sank within me; he made a motion to retire; I implored him to remain to pardon me, and at least to hear me speak. He reluctantly consented, but stood all the time. Towards the end of the interview, he appeared to soften a little, and asked what I wanted of him. I inquired if he had received any of my letters from India. He replied he had. "Then you know the extent of my wishes." With bitterness, he answered, "I will not do as you require." This, he said with the handle of the lock in his hand. I felt as if falling to the ground; when he came up to

me, and in a calmer manner inquired what rank I held in the army.

I explained all to him ; my hopes began to revive, but the sweat stood in large drops on my forehead, which, through sickness and anxiety, was pale as death. Humanity, or the fear of a discovery began to operate upon him ; he became more minute in his inquiries as to the length of my furlough, and where I meant to reside during its continuance. Fearful to offend, I told him all, and that I would remain any where he pleased to appoint ; he desired me to go to my old and tried friend, Mr. B——, at Kilwinning, and that in two days he would come and see me there. My heart thanked him, and we parted seemingly reconciled. He charged me on no account to write to him direct, and chid me severely for the last and only letter I had ever sent in this manner. Once more I met my father at Mr. B——'s, when he agreed to get for me what I earnestly sought, and which he could so easily obtain, for several of his friends, who knew his secret concerning me, offered their assistance, and requested him to speak to Lord Eglinton to get a commission for me in the Ayrshire militia, from which I could

at once volunteer into the line. But this he positively refused. One of his friends had even corresponded with the late Sir W. Cunninghame on my behalf, who agreed to do what was required for me ; but my father would not hear of it, and thus neither acted himself nor would allow others ; yet he ever promised to do as I wished, and get me an appointment in the army. Falsely amused in this manner my time passed on.

I was in Scotland all the winter, save a trip I was forced to make to Woolwich, at the end of the second month, through a mistake in the direction of a letter as to lengthening my furlough ; and even this arose from the friendless relation in which I stood to all the world ; for when my furlough was granted, it was requisite to give a direct answer to the question, where I was to reside, and where I might be found. This was a puzzling question to me ; I gave the name and direction of a house I had stopped in during my residence in Glasgow, when a recruit. I could not acknowledge to them that “ I had neither house, nor ha', nor hame.”

Thus I passed a long and severe winter in Glasgow ; continually tantalized by my father's pro-

mises, and want of exertion in my behalf. My evil destiny was still at work. I was feverish and restless ; I wandered all about, and felt in its most painful severity hope deferred. Often, when passing the jail, the calumnies of the Dundonald people stung me to the soul ; it was said to have been my mother's abode ; I felt as if I would have been happy had the ground opened and swallowed me up. At other times, as I wandered solitary on the green, my imagination would take a melancholy though pleasing turn, and paint her married and happy in the Highlands, surrounded by her husband and family, from whom my existence was kept a profound secret, where it would be cruel in the extreme for me to break in upon them, and by my presence disturb that happy domestic peace which I loved to embody, as I walked alone, disowned and unheeded in the world. Let me be unhappy, let me be despised, I will bear it all ; but let my mother enjoy tranquillity undisturbed by my unwelcome presence. I must, however, hurry on to more interesting events.

CHAPTER IV.

Continuance in the army and Discharge.—Journey to London.—

Again sets out for the West Indies, to endeavour to get to Carriacou.—Arrival in Demerara.

AT length I joined the corps at Woolwich, feeble in body and depressed in mind. There I did effective duty until July 1812, when I was sent to Ireland, with the command of a detachment for Captain Durnford's company. During my stay in England nothing surprised me more than the spirit of revolt displayed by the people in general against the government. At different times I was sent out with the command of escorts of ammunition, for the use of the local militia ; this was most galling and disagreeable to me, for, go where we would, as soldiers we were hated and despised, insulted, and loaded with the foulest epithets,—in our different billets looked upon and received as if we had carried pestilence, robbery, and pillage with us. It would be a disagreeable task

to enumerate the many instances of insult to which I was liable, in these times of dissatisfaction with the government, and of utter insensibility to the blessings that Britain enjoyed, compared with the surrounding nations : let one be a specimen of all the others.

It was in a place called Ware, where I halted my party, after a fatiguing day's march, in foul weather ; it was in the month of May 1812, at the time that Spencer Percival was shot. I was shocked and disgusted at the audacious language that was employed in speaking of the government, and the epithets that were applied to ourselves, for we were viewed as the offscourings of the inhabitants of Britain. All in the public-house where I stopped were prophesying and wishing for a rebellion ; many hesitated not to say that the melancholy event was an indication of its commencement, and approved of the murder, wishing that many of the ministers were served in the same way.—“ D—n them, they ought to be, and will be so too, and that you will see, whoever lives to see it,” said one, addressing his discourse to me ; others cursed the government for robbing and making slaves of them,

and starving the people ; and this too at the same moment that many of them were tipsy, others eating cheese, bread, pork, and mutton, and all fat and fair ; they appeared to be too well fed, and did not know it. I civilly put the question to one of them, who, with his son, was most vociferous, yet consumed a great quantity of mutton-chops all the time, if he really was starved ; he looked in a rage at me, and swore, saying, “ It is you and such as you that enable them to starve us ; ” I smiled, and said, You are in a better way to die of a surfeit than of fasting, friend. “ We cannot afford to pay for it, that’s what a means,” he said ; “ but d—n it, Ise an Englishman, and I will ha’e my rights too, and that’s what I will, in spite of them, an’ you to boot ; what are they better than us ? No, d—n it if they are, or half so good neither ; and what are you but a slave yourself to them, a poor pitiful scoundrel, who has sold himself for a shilling a day ; body and mind, you cannot have a will of your own, or do one thing but what you are bid, and must go to be shot at like a cock at Shrovetide ; there is not a spark of spirit in thy body or thee would not wear that coat ; d—n thee, I’ll box thee for a farthing,

and all thy company, one after the other ; if thee has no the money I'll box thee for love." All eyes were upon us ; I saw they wished for a quarrel ; my blood boiled in my veins, yet the fear of being defeated in the character of champion withheld me, more than any consequences, for I was so very weak from my long and still unrecovered sickness it was with difficulty I did my duty. Conscious of this, I restrained my temper, and turning from these rude and boorish men, walked up stairs to bed, humbled and dispirited far more than such a low adventure ought to have made me. Weary as I was, sleep forsook my eyes ; and I passed another night of melancholy retrospection. Shortly after this I was sent with the command of a detachment to join the company at Belfast, and bade adieu to Britain for a time.

On the 21st July, 1812, I landed in Ireland on the wall between the Light-house and the Pigeon-house, then marched my men to the Castle of Dublin, and shewed my route to Lieutenant and Adjutant Walker, of the Royal Artillery Invalids, and commenced my duties in Island Bridge, where I remained until the end of the war, mostly all the

time in very bad health. Once I had a severe fever, yet I could not think of obtaining my discharge. During this period I twice visited my father, finding my written applications of no avail ; all I got were false and delusive promises. While here one occurrence took place, which for a whole year rendered my life almost unsupportable ; it was innocently brought upon me by myself.

The men whom I had brought from Woolwich were mostly all from the north of Ireland ; several detachments had been marched from Island Bridge since our arrival ; my detachment became anxious to be also marched to their company, and never were done urging me to have them removed. I had no means of doing so, as I had no power over our movements ; still they would insist upon me writing to Captain Durnford, to request him to have them removed. For some weeks I resisted their importunities ; at length one day two of them assailed me, just as I was making out my guard report at the Pigeon-house. To get free of these incessant attacks, I agreed to do as they desired, and, without reflecting, I wrote to the captain, read the letter to them and a sergeant

who was there at the time, all of whom highly approved of it. I paid the postage, and away it went. I thought no more of it until a few days after, when the men who belonged to me were ordered to march for their destination, but to the surprise of myself and every one there was no order for me. I became alarmed; I saw all was not as it ought to have been; unconscious of any thing amiss on my part, I knew not what to fear. I was on duty at the Pigeon-house; hope and joy after a short time succeeded my alarm, for I imagined that my father had at length bestirred himself in my behalf, and was in terms about a commission for me, and that this was the cause of my being detained. In the midst of these pleasing dreams, Lieutenant Walker came to the guard-house and called me out; I thought him the bearer of good tidings, and obeyed with alacrity. The moment I saw him my heart sunk within me, anger was strongly depicted in his countenance; he first looked at me, then turned his head aside.

L. W. You have written to Captain Durnford, sir?

A. A. Yes, sir.

L. W. For yourself and the other men to join the company?

A. A. Yes, sir.

He then turned to me in great anger, and looking me hard in the face, said, "It is a pretty letter indeed from a soldier to his officer. Captain Durnford has acted most properly in returning it enclosed to General Trotter. Captain Durnford most properly says you have written it, sir, in a bad spirit; I applaud your captain for returning it; this is the cause of your being detained here; had you not written that vile letter, in a very short time you would have been sent to your company, but now you shall never be allowed to join; you shall remain here, sir, while you are in the regiment, and do duty, and care shall be taken that you do it, for such another letter was never penned to an officer; it shews you are not content with the place you are in; it shews disrespect to your officer to take such liberties; it is dictating, it is mutinous; for you are not content to apply for yourself, but boldly extend your application for others, putting mischief into their heads, and rendering them discontented. You have brought a mark of displeasure upon your-

self you will not easily get rid off; you have done yourself more harm than you are aware of; you shall be taught another lesson very soon to your sorrow, for it is written like a lawyer; the Lord Mayor of Dublin could not have written in bolder terms. It is more like a commander than a soldier. The letter is in the castle, sir, against you, and points out your discontent. Why do you say in it, ‘a bit of a detachment;’ that is a reflection upon some one, sir. I am desired by General Trotter to reprimand you, and to warn you to appear before him the day after to-morrow.” He then cooled, and said, “That he need not say much to me, as the General would say much more to me than he could.” He then began to reason with me upon my folly in making myself an army lawyer, and said, “That I ought to be more circumspect in my writing, as it was worse than speaking; he wondered what could provoke me to it, as I had no cause of dissatisfaction under the command of General Trotter,” and a great deal more; he then dismissed me.

Never was a human being more taken by surprise than I was. I could not utter one word in my own defence, conscious as I was of no evil intention; as

I recovered, I resolved to say as little as possible, lest it would be further construed against me, and added to what they called army lawyership; but I felt completely depressed. I could neither eat nor sleep, the dread of the interview with the General and its consequences haunted me like a hideous phantom. At this time I was extremely unwell; I wished myself dead and buried, or any where; but there was no earthly way of extricating myself.

The dreaded day came, and I was ushered into the presence of General Trotter. Lieutenant-Colonel Maclean and Lieutenant Walker were present; I stood as trembling and abashed as if I had been caught in the most extensive forgery, and that death was to be the sure result. All eyes were fixed upon me, Lieut.-Col. Maclean spoke first.

Lieut.-Col. M. Are you the man that wrote that infamous letter?

I answered, scarce audible from agitation, Yes, sir.

Lieut.-Col. M. What is your name, sir?

A. A. Alexander Alexander.

Lieut.-Col. M. What countryman are you?

A. A. A Scotsman.

Lieut.-Col. M. What did you mean by it? How could you presume or think of writing and sending such a wicked and mischievous letter, so full of ill temper and bad meaning to an officer? Did you write it yourself?

A. A. I did, sir.

Lieut.-Col. M. Did any person advise you to it?

A. A. No, sir.

Lieut.-Col. M. You are a lawyer, sir.

A. A. No, sir.

Lieut.-Col. M. Then you are a lawyer's clerk.

A. A. No, sir.

Lieut.-Col. M. Then you have been so, sir?

A. A. No, sir.

Lieut.-Col. M. You must be one, sir; for I am certain no one else except a lawyer or a lawyer's clerk could write that letter, or a letter like it. What trade are you then, sir?

A. A. I am of no trade, sir.

Lieut.-Col. M. How the devil were you brought up then?

A. A. To no business, sir.

Here there was a pause, while he continued to gaze

upon me in anger and surprise. I was upon the point of relating a few of the peculiar circumstances of my wayward life, but was restrained by my feelings, and the anger expressed in all their looks. I was hesitating what to do, when General Trotter threw down his pen and glasses, and called out, "Where is that letter?" Lieutenant Walker said it had been sent to Island Bridge, to Major Walker; he then turned to me in great anger, as if at a loss for words to express himself, and said, very loud, "You are dissatisfied under my command, sir?" and paused. I was unable to speak a word for myself, either to beg pardon, to acknowledge my error, or make an apology, so great was my confusion; besides, I knew what I said might be construed against me, and as I was considered mutinous already, or at best an army lawyer, it would have been thought dictating, insolent, or impudent, and would have been replied to by "What do you mean by that, sir?" as I had seen again and again in my army career. Warned by which, I had made up my mind only to answer yes, or no, as the safest way. For half-an-hour the whole three were at me, one after another; as soon as the one paused, the next

took it up ; what surprised me most was, that each of them took it as if the letter referred to himself, when God is my witness, I meant or thought of no one when I wrote the unfortunate letter. The General, the Colonel, and Lieutenant, every now and then inquired what I meant by the phrase, "Doing duty in a bit of a detachment ;" this expression I had inadvertently used. At last, Lieutenant Walker, who was always a good hand at helping a lame dog over a stile, addressed the General, "Sir, that letter proves the opinion I formed of him when I first saw him." I was then discharged from their presence like a dog, with this assurance, that I would hear what the adjutant had to say to me, when I arrived at Island Bridge, and that the letter would be kept in the office, that my offence might not be forgotten.

I was so agitated and confused that, as soon as the door shut, I was forced to sit down upon the stair to recover myself, and actually swept with my fingers the large drops of sweat from my forehead. Thus confused and faint, I reached the Pigeon-house rather late, I was however there time enough to march off. The adjutant being there himself to

march the party back, a thing I never saw before or since, it being always the duty of a subaltern officer. During the march his eyes were never off me : ever finding fault about something or other, and said that he would teach me better when we arrived at Island Bridge. I immediately saw that my sufferings had already commenced for that same letter, and this was what was called seeing me do my duty.

We marched round by the south circular road to Island Bridge. Before the relief command from the Pigeon-house was dismissed off the parade-ground, the adjutant rode up to me, before all present, and called out, " Bombardier Alexander, you have applied to Captain Durnford to be sent to your Company at Belfast, which you have prevented by your application ; and now you shall stop here until you are grey-headed, and do duty with me in a ' bit of a detachment,' and you will see Major Walker to-morrow on that subject." We were then dismissed. Thus " Old Ceylon," as I was called, became to every one a subject of general conversation, laughter, and low jibes, as it is the nature of soldiers to laugh at the scrapes into which each other get.

Sick at heart, distressed in body and mind, I retired to bed to ruminate upon my forlorn prospects. I saw sure disgrace before me, it was next to impossible for me to escape when all the officers were against me ; not that I feared for any fault in myself ; but I was responsible for the faults of others under my charge, over whom I had little control if not vigorously supported by my superiors, for the power over the privates had much decreased since my enlistment in 1801. At that time a bombardier could make the men tremble at his nod, now they would argue the point of obedience, and endeavour, if possible, to extort a rash word from him, then be the complainers, and with all their art endeavour to make him appear in the wrong by having provoked them with abuse.

Next morning at parade every one looked at me, and many of the non-commissioned officers avoided speaking to me lest they should be noticed and get ill-will. At length Major Walker passed through the square to his office, when I was sent for into it. The clerks, sergeant-major, the adjutant, and some other officers present, had their eyes upon me, as I stood pale and dejected. Major Walker then spoke,

but not so loud as the General: "You have written a letter to Captain Durnford to be removed to the Company at Belfast, and, with a very bad spirit, evincing contempt and discontent at being under my command: The letter is now here against you, and for it you have been before General Trotter; therefore it does not become me to say more to you, than for that letter you will now stop here to do duty in 'a bit of a detachment.'" Then addressing the adjutant, he told him to see that I did my duty, to keep that letter in his desk, and "let it be often read, so as not to forget it." I was then dismissed, well knowing what I had to look for.

For twelve months after this it would be vain to attempt to describe how I was harassed and abused. I had the charge of the detachment room; twice a day this room was visited in search of faults, the others were only once: if a musket was perceived in the arm-rack on the half-cock instead of being down, as the rule is, it was "Bombardier Alexander, what is this? Why are the arms in the rack so? You do not do your duty, sir, but I will make you do it. I will take that strip off your arm you are so proud of." I exerted all my ener-

gies, still some trifles would at times escape my notice ; the men who were in the fault had not a word said to them ; they almost put me at defiance, as I was at variance with the officers. It was with the greatest difficulty I could get any thing done, not until I was upon the point of confining them, for whatever was in fault, and it was only trifles that escaped my notice. The adjutant never said a word to the men, but I was always upbraided by him, and blamed by them as the cause of their being thus harassed. “ D—n it, why should we all suffer for you, was their usual exclamation.”

I myself had learned to smoke in Ceylon, many of the men did the same ; and in all the rooms of the barracks smoking was winked at, though contrary to orders. I broke my own pipe, and every one in the room ; I neither smoked myself, nor allowed any other to do it there. For this I was abused and insulted, but I knew the consequence ; had the smallest smell of tobacco been found, I would have been confined, broke, and turned into the ranks,—but enough of this. By my care and exertions I escaped the fate they were so anxious to allot to me.

At length, I rejoice to say, and perhaps the reader

is as well pleased to hear, that the year 1814 arrived. It was evident the war was soon to be at an end, as my hopes from my father had for some months been. A reduction was ordered; and harassed and dispirited "Old Ceylon" was marked for his discharge.

In the month of October I was again forced to go into the hospital with an excessive pain in my head, for which many remedies were tried before it yielded to medicine. During my convalescence, the medical board sat, before which I attended; Dr. Jamieson, the surgeon-general, examined me, putting several questions as to my length of time in the regiment, and service, which I answered. Well, my man, he said, you will get your discharge and one shilling per day. My heart began to swell, I had arrived at last, in spite of all my exertions, to the much dreaded point, "a poor old pensioner:" The shilling per day, I thought, at this time, a secondary consideration; yet I could not help thinking it too little, as none of the Artillery I had the command of from Ceylon got less in 1811, some of whom had not been so long in the army at that time as I had been, and never were non-commissioned

officers ; some had been more than once flogged ; and now, after four years more service, to get just the same pension as these privates I could not think equal justice ; but the money I cared not much about, as I meant to be off for the West Indies as soon as I was free.

If such were my thoughts when I passed, how chagrined did I feel when my discharge arrived from the Ordnance Office, on the 31st of December 1814, and a pension of only ninepence per day. I felt I had been deeply injured by my father ; as for the Ordnance Office, I valued their award at this time very little. Had my father said, decidedly, when I saw him after my return, that he would do nothing for me, I would have returned immediately and passed the Board, a thing I could have done at any time, from the complication of diseases under which I laboured ; but, deluded by his promises, I had endured four years of suffering and loss of time, and received only the reduced pension of ninepence per day for life.

No sooner had I got my discharge in my pocket than I felt I was a new man ; I was once more free ; I actually thought I stood a few inches higher,

as I stretched myself like one who has just laid down a heavy load. I tarried not long in Dublin, but with the first opportunity set off for Scotland once again. Twice had I been home, importuning my father for the commission, and each time, like a child, had been soothed with hopes never meant to be realized.

The weather being foul, and the wind contrary, it was the 7th of January before I sailed. During my stay in Dublin, while I walked about in coloured clothes, the difference that lies between the soldier's coat, which, in my ignorance, I thought the most honourable, and the genteel plain one, was most striking. When dressed as a bombardier I was avoided, or looked upon as an animal that did not belong to the same species ; but now I was politely treated by all wherever I went. In the coffee-room I was served with respect ; there was now no suspicion of me ; before, although I was still the same man, I was saucily served, and eyed as if I had been the greatest of vagabonds. Farewell, army, I am done with thee for ever ! in thee I suffered much both in body and mind.

On the 7th, I left George's Quay in the Hero

brig for Irvine. We were driven into Donaghadee on the 8th, sailed again on the 11th, and reached Troon on the night of the 12th, which was very dark and stormy. Our escape from shipwreck was miraculous, for, in this dreadful storm, many vessels had perished. One or two lay on shore at the Troon perfect wrecks. After paying my passage there remained only two shillings in my pocket; but my heart was light, and I felt my strength rapidly returning, though the pain in my side was at times still very severe.

I walked to Irvine where I drew two pounds from an agent of my father's, who gave it at once. The agent and friend of my father rejoiced at my being quit of the army, and regretted my long stay in it; he gave me the first piece of good news I had heard for a long time, that my father had, through his importunity, agreed to write to Sir J—— C——, who was at this time in the India-house, in my behalf, to get me out to India once more, to endeavour to mend my wayward fortune. My heart bounded in my breast. I set out next morning light as a greyhound for Kilwinning, to visit my constant and tried friend Mr. B——.

The weather was cold and stormy, yet I felt it not ; hope and joy were my companions on the road for the first time in my life ; and though snow and sleet darkened the atmosphere, it fell upon and around me unheeded ; hundreds of miles I have travelled, amidst ravishing scenery and glorious sunshine, but never with the exhilarating sensations I felt in my walk upon this dark and stormy day.

Mr. B—— confirmed the welcome intelligence of my father's intentions towards me. I thanked him for all his kindness, and requested him to write to my father that I had arrived, and would immediately go to Glasgow, and await his pleasure ; as I knew well that nothing could give him more uneasiness than my being near his residence. Mr. B—— approved my resolution, and did all I required. Next morning I set off for Glasgow, where I remained without hearing from my father until the 10th of March, when the news came that Buonaparte had landed again in France, and was moving towards the capital, carrying all before him. I had, until now, been weary and listless, day after day anxiously looking for my father, when this intelligence arrived. I could endure suspense no longer,

but again set out for Kilwinning, when Mr. B—— wrote to him that I was again there, and how anxious I was to be off. A letter came saying I was upon no account to come near him, but to return to Glasgow, and he would see me in two or three days. There was no alternative ; I again returned to Glasgow to await his pleasure. At this time I got intelligence that one of his sisters had been inquiring after me in a friendly manner ; for my existence was no secret to the family, though my father thought it was, and sacrificed me to his desire of concealment. As I went along by the seashore, I saw him walking with another gentleman on his estate ; he recognised me and immediately turned his back. My heart swelled as I walked along, but it soon passed off, as I was well used to it. I was still however often insulted by low minds, even where it was least to be looked for. One time, above all others, I shall never forget, it was after my discharge : I was at tea in Glasgow with a friend of Mr. B——'s, when a minister of the Gospel, belonging to the Antiburgher Church, came in. He was a Dundonald man, but I had not seen him since I was four years of age. Mr. G—— introduced me

to him as Mr. Alexander, thinking, as we were from the same village, it would be agreeable. Judge my horror when he, holding down his head, replied to Mr. G——, “I mind when they caa’d him Sanoch Nathing.” I actually trembled with passion. To knock him down was my first impulse, but respect for my friend withheld me. I could not articulate a sound, but I felt my colour come and go. Mr. G—— appeared grieved and embarrassed; all conversation ceased, and our friendly meeting broke up. Such was the humiliation to which in Scotland I was ever subject. I was therefore doubly anxious to leave it, and for ever. That war was again on the eve of commencing was evident to all, though few thought it would be of any continuance.

It was the 26th of March before my father came to Glasgow, and he came in anger, but soon became cool, and agreed to fit me out once more. I got a suit of coloured clothes, and a few other things, and twenty-three pounds in cash, with a letter to Sir J—— C——, and once more set out upon the world, to commence anew, and attempt to recover my lost time. Upon my arrival in Leith, I took a cabin passage for London. There were a

good many passengers, both ladies and gentlemen; the gentlemen had most of them been either in the army or navy, and were at this time going to join their respective services. The passage being a long one, we became pretty well acquainted with each other. As my appearance was military, the question was often put to me, "What regiment do you belong to?—What rank do you hold?—Are you on half-pay, or on leave of absence? These questions, plain as they were, puzzled me a good deal to answer; therefore I never gave a direct reply, being fully determined never to speak of my bombardier rank, which I knew would sink me all at once in the estimation of my fellow passengers.

I formed an intimacy with a genteel-looking young man, which embarrassed me very much during my short stay in London. He had been in the commissariat department in Spain, and was now on his way to London, to endeavour, if possible, again to be appointed; and was in great spirits on account of the war breaking out anew. So confident was he of an appointment, that he had not one shilling in his pocket to pay his passage. I was struck with astonishment at his unhesitating assurance,

and inquired how he meant to act. "Oh!" says he, "there is no fear, I will leave my trunks in the ship until I get my appointment, then draw one or two months' pay in advance, when I shall be able to relieve them before I am shipped for the Continent." I remarked to him the unpleasantness of such a transaction. "I am well aware of it," he said, "but there is no other way of my getting to London, and there is nothing to be done unless I am on the spot. I have done all in my power to avoid it in vain. I requested one of our fellow-passengers, a townsman of mine, who knows me well, to lend me as much as pay my passage, but he refused, and as you see he will scarce speak to me since I made the request; but I will do well enough, for I will go to my old lodgings where I will be welcome to remain until I get an appointment." I then told him that I was going in quest of a situation myself, but that my views were towards the East Indies; that I had not much money, but sufficient for my present purposes; and as I doubted not he was a gentleman, I would lend him as much as get him out of his present difficulties;—I imme-

diately gave him five pounds. From this moment our friendship commenced ; we unbosomed ourselves to each other, and agreed that whichever of us got his appointment first was to assist his fellow, until he likewise was appointed. I now felt comparatively assured, as he knew London well, and was to do all in his power for me in the way of advice. At length, on the afternoon of April 14, we landed; and, under the guidance of the commissary clerk, Captain Bruce of the 2d garrison battalion, a midshipman of the name of Wemyss, and myself, went to Newcastle Street, to the Pavilion Coffeehouse. After breakfast we all parted to proceed on our respective business. I walked to the India warehouses at Shoreditch, and delivered my letter. I was civilly treated by Sir J——C——; but every hope was put an end to from that quarter at my first visit. In vain I proposed to accept of any situation,—down to a conductor of Ordnance stores to the Company, in any part of their dominions. We all met at dinner melancholy enough ; the clerk had been as unsuccessful as myself ; the captain was the only one of us who was

free from care, for he was rich, and was thus far on his way back again to Gibraltar, where he was town-adjutant.

Thus day followed day, and each day brought only disappointments. I petitioned the Duke of York for an appointment in any native regiment abroad, but my want of cash baffled me in my application, as nothing can be done without it. Had I been placed last on the list, I might have died of old age before it came to my turn. I, however, got from his Royal Highness a polite answer to my application, which afterwards was of great use to me.

I soon became very uneasy; my cash was almost all spent; I too late began to regret my folly in putting myself under the guidance of the clerk, and coming to so expensive quarters; the midshipman was the only one who had been successful, and left us; my five pounds I had looked upon as gone from me for ever; and sorely did I regret my ill-timed liberality, when one morning, as we walked in the Park, musing upon our gloomy prospects, the clerk began, in an indirect way, to sound me with regard to my present situation, and clapping me upon the shoulder, said, "Alexander, I have found out a way

to retrieve our circumstances by one bold step, if you will stand by me. I am a saddler by trade ; now as I cannot get an appointment I mean to go to America and commence business ; and you must go with me as you had agreed to do if I got my appointment."—We had agreed, if he was appointed, that I should pass for his brother, and by this means get a passage to the army then forming in the Netherlands, where there was every chance that when on the spot something or other might fall to my share.—How in the world, I answered, can we get to America, or set up business, when we are both as poor as rats ? " Oh ! give yourself no concern about that, I will soon find the means ; if you will only agree to stick by me, I will put you up to the plan, as I know how to act."

During this strange speech I was lost in amazement. I neither suspected, far less knew, what his object was, until he coolly and deliberately proposed for us to rob Captain Bruce. At first I thought he only meant to try what kind of a character I was, but looking stedfastly in his face, I saw every mark of sincerity in it. I felt horror-

struck, and bitterly began to regret the confidence I had so rashly placed in an utter stranger. Still doubting if he really spoke his sentiments, I replied, It would be a great pity to rob an old gentleman like him, who was so very friendly and unsuspecting. "Oh!" says he, "the old fellow has got plenty of cash, for I examined his portmanteau, and I heard the guineas rattle; and from its weight and sound I know there must be five hundred at least in it. He has no family, and a good situation, while we have nothing, and perhaps will get nothing; and where can be the pity." I saw too plainly that he was in earnest in his proposal. I argued with him of its wickedness and baseness, even were there no danger to be apprehended. The danger he laughed at, saying, "He had provided for every consequence; and if I would only consent he would do it all himself." I flatly told him I never would. The conversation here dropped, and I made up my mind to put the captain on his guard, without exposing my unworthy associate. All my concern was how to recover the money I had lent him, of which I was now in great want.

The day after this disgraceful proposal he returned to dinner, in high spirits ; he had got assurance of his appointment on the following day ; and as he renewed his agreement to help me away with him, and to assist me on the Continent when we arrived there, I went to bed in better spirits than I had done for some days. Next day, at dinner, he paid his bill at the coffeehouse, and returned my money, which I had given up for lost. I now began to prepare for my departure, as he did not know the hour he was to get his orders to embark ; but this part of the agreement he had no intention to fulfil. He took French leave of me, and was some time sailed before I knew, although I was waiting for him with anxiety. I was thus left in the lurch in no enviable state of mind. Captain Bruce left London on the 29th for Portsmouth. The necessity of my removal was most urgent ; every nerve had been strained to get a situation of one kind or another in vain ; I, of all the four, alone remained in the coffeehouse. Next day I set out in quest of a cheaper lodging ; through the whole day I went from street to street without finding one. I was both astonished and annoyed at the suspicions and ques-

tions of the lodging-house people ; many of their inquiries were both rude and indelicate ; many were by me unanswerable ; however, I at last got lodgings in the bottom of the same street I resided in, which I was to take possession of next morning. After breakfast I paid my bill at the coffeehouse, then went to the Echo Office and advertised myself as a young man who had travelled a good deal, could give satisfactory references, and had no objections to go to the Continent or plantations in any situation, as assistant, &c., but all in vain. Yet several curious interviews arose out of this advertisement between me and the London sharpers, who thought they would be able to defraud me out of my money by their specious promises. I always heard their golden proposals to the end, then shewed them I knew better than themselves what they spoke about, and laughed at them. Had I not known better, their promises were well calculated to deceive, for they spoke as if every thing had been in their power, if the applicant only had money.

I was thus driven to the verge of despair ; every means had been tried, but nothing was done. At last I went to a person in the Minories who enlisted for

the East India Company, to inquire, as if for another, the terms of their engaging men, resolved that if nothing better should occur, to go as a soldier once more. It was now far on in May, and I had nothing to look to until the first of July, when I would draw my once despised pension of ninepence per day. In my extreme distress I had applied in vain for its augmentation. I was now literally starving. Day after day my diet was sour ammunition bread, bought at the Tower, and coffee without either sugar or milk ; a halfpenny worth of radishes was many a day all the dinner I had ; still my appearance was respectable, but all I had left was on my back. I must have enlisted or been turned to the street, had not my lodging people agreed to trust me the rent of my room until pension-day; my pride would not allow me to tell them from whence I was to get the money. I was so spent I could scarce walk. One day, in my distress, I actually applied for charity to a respectable-looking female, who repulsed me in a rude manner ; never did I apply again. Once and only once, my honesty was tried in the severest manner. Nay, reader do not laugh ; I am conscious the incident may appear trifling,

but so low was I reduced, it was a matter of great moment to me at the time. I was walking slowly along the Minories ; the gnawings of hunger were almost intolerable, when I saw a girl with a child in her arms who let a penny-piece drop from its hand. I saw it fall ; both walked on unheeding their loss ; to pick it up and purchase a loaf was the idea that shot through my mind. I lifted it with joy ; but that I knew the owners, for they were in sight, drove the temptation from me. I walked a little quicker, overtook them, and returned it. So great were my wants, I blush to say, that this appeared to me an effort. Repeatedly I had written to my father ; still no answer came. I was so bold as to write to one of his sisters, who, I had heard while in Scotland, once inquired after me in a kindly manner. All my appeals produced me no attention from either ; I wished myself dead again and again.

That very evening, after the penny adventure, deliverance came from a quarter where I never could have looked for it. So completely had all my prospects been blighted, so utterly hopeless had I become of freeing myself from my desperate situation, that for days together I wandered on

Towerhill, throwing myself in the way of the press-gang, who were busy at this time picking up stragglers; but they always passed me by. I wished earnestly to be impressed, that I might put off the time until the first of July, having it in my power to get free when I chose.

At my return from my cheerless wanderings in the Park and Towerhill, I found a young lad in my lodgings, who had just come from the country. It was agreed he should be my bed-fellow, and I soon gained his confidence; his history was short and not uncommon.

James G—— was his name, from Devizes, (Wiltshire;) he was about seventeen years of age. Not liking the family where he was bound as an apprentice, with his father's concurrence, as he told me, he had broken his indentures, having served from three to four years of his time as a linen-draper. His sole desire, as he said, was to go abroad into the world, that he might see misfortunes and get adventures. Like too many of his age, his notions of life were all romance. From him I got the loan of a few shillings, which enabled me to weather the storm until the longed-for first

of July, when I meant to return once more to Scotland, and die there of hunger rather than in London, if it was so ordered; but I knew I would be once again put in a better way of going abroad than I had yet been. To cut short this cruel period of misery, when I was actually famishing in the midst of profusion on all hands, and insulted by the low and vulgar for my military appearance,—for my pale and languid countenance too plainly told of my distress,—as I passed the doors of the ale-houses in my wanderings, where the grovelling mechanics sat swilling porter, and eating almost to gorging, my eyes would involuntary turn to them as I slowly walked on; then would they taunt me in language such as this, “D—n you, you are not now knocking about poor fellows as good as yourself—ah, and a d—d deal better too, and feasting on the best, while they were starving. Now it is your turn to starve.” Then in derision as I passed on, taking no notice of their low remarks, one or other would hold out the pot and say, “Here take a pull,”—then snatch it back saying, “D—n me if I would give you one

drop of water." I mention this only in contrast to scenes I shall soon have to narrate.

As young G—— became acquainted with me his confidence increased. All our talk was of the best manner to dispose of ourselves, and where to go, he having agreed to bear my expenses, for the sake of my protection and company, until I could repay him. Many were our proposals, for days together, and bright were his golden dreams; but in the West Indies my hopes were placed, and there we fixed upon at length. Yet to go to Malta, where General Maitland had gone, often recurred to me as the most eligible; for my hopes were great, that, upon my producing to him General Bridges' letter, along with Colonel Macnab's, he would do something for me, either in Malta or the Ionian Isles. But to be near Elizabet, and, after having recovered my lost fortunes a little, return to Carriacou, fixed my determination. Now our walks were to the West India Docks, to inquire for a vessel. At length we found the *Busiris*, West Indiaman, advertised for Barbadoes and Martinique, as a fine vessel, elegantly fitted up for pas-

sengers. We went to the owners, Pugh and Redman, to make inquiries, and found the cabin passage to be L.60 a-head, and the steerage, L.30. This was bad news, as the lad G—— told me he had only L.50 on his arrival in London, and now I knew that some of it must be consumed. I had repaid him his loan when I drew my pension; but had he never even touched it, the sum was not sufficient. He perceived my melancholy, and, laughing-ly, said, “Oh, never mind, I can pay the money.” I inquired how; when he confessed that his father had given him L.80, but, in caution, he told me it was only fifty. I commended his prudence; but I will do him the justice to say, young as he was, and void of experience, he was the most economical person with his money I ever saw; he often blamed me for extravagance, careful as I was, because I gave the first demand for any article I purchased, while he would higggle and cheapen, as if his last shilling were in his hand, and look upon every dealer as a rogue, a thing I never could do.

From the owners, we went on board to the captain to examine the vessel; we found her equal to

our wishes in accommodation, with a fine fore-castle for the men, a cuddy, and a cabin below, and the steerage adjoining to it. She was not to sail for some time, during which I hoped to hear from Scotland; for I was loath to think I was cast off for ever, and that my melancholy appeals to my father's humanity would be all unheeded because I was far from his presence.

At length the period arrived when she was to sail; and still no letter had come. The bargain was made at length for our passage—for myself, L.30, and the boy L.20. Anxious to hear from Scotland, I remained in London until the ship moved down to Gravesend. As my last resource, I left word with Mr. Lavender, my good landlord, to keep any letter safe with him, until he heard from me, and gave him Mr. B——'s address, with leave to open and answer letters, so good an opinion had I of him.

On the 28th of August, I bade London farewell, and we went on board the Gravesend passage-boat. Upon our arrival the captain of the *Busiris* demanded our passage money, and appeared much disappointed when he found we had been at the

owners ; he said they were very angry with him for having agreed for the L.50 instead of the L.60 ; but my opinion was, he meant to have defrauded the owners of it altogether ; and I augured bad usage upon the passage from this circumstance. When we paid him the money, he very artfully gave us a receipt for a passage to the West Indies, instead of Martinique. Much as I had seen of the world, it did not occur to me that he would afterwards make the use of this receipt he did. When the money was paid, the captain took all his passengers to the Alien Office, to have their names entered ; the person who kept the office also kept a tavern ; he was very civil and polite, spoke to us all as we entered, but it was his interest to be very busy at the time ; he said he would transact our business in a little, and we were shown into a room ; a waiter who attended, said, " What shall I bring you to drink, gentlemen ? " Of course we could not but choose, each had a glass which cost him a shilling. We were then called one by one into the office, and our host inquired my reason for leaving the country, and if I had any reference. I was astonished, and replied, I knew no one in that quarter but General Bridges

in Greenwich; he, looking at me all the time, silently and civilly, said "That would do,—a shilling, sir, if you please."

On the 30th we embarked, but did not leave the Lizard Point until the 7th of September, beating about all his time with foul winds. On the 19th we reached Funchall, but the port regulations prevented us coming to an anchor until next morning.

There were a number of cabin passengers on board, but none in the steerage except my charge and myself. The vessel was good and new; we had plenty of room and light during the day, but none after sunset, save what the moon gave. I found on board the *Busiris*, what I had often found before, that a vessel at sea is like a little city or state; and in no city on earth can aristocracy be carried to a greater pitch. Narrow as its limits are, it has its parties and factions which reign with the greater violence on account of the limited sphere in which they act. We were only steerage passengers, the "*servum pecus*" of the little state. Were even the angel Gabriel a steerage passenger, he would be despised; and no good quality perceived in him on board,—despised from the captain down to the

youngest apprentice. During the thirteen days we had been at sea no one had exchanged a word with us, save the common seamen, except a German who had been an officer in the service of Buonaparte, who was going to join his family at Teneriffe, and a young Portuguese returning to Madeira from England, having been there for some time getting his education. Those alone were frank and friendly with us, because they were not English, and free from their prejudices; all the others looked upon us as beings of an inferior class. There was a ship-master of St. Vincent; a vulgar woman, the wife of a surgeon going to join her husband in Nevis; and another would-be lady from Dublin, with the share of vanity peculiar to her country, going to join her brother in Maderia—a female fortune hunter, who slept with her servant in the cuddy, an interesting English girl, better educated than her mistress. When this Irish lady walked the quarter-deck, she made the poor girl walk behind her at a respectful distance. Many a time young G—— and I sat and could scarce refrain from laughing at the affected airs she gave herself. She and the surgeon's wife looked like two mimics striving which

could best caricature the fine lady. This was the only amusement we had, for the weather was fine, and the vessel glided steadily and smoothly through the water. All this scorn of the cabin passengers was nothing new to me, but my companion was much hurt, and his anticipations of pleasure and mirth on the voyage were entirely destroyed. Had I had the means, I would for his sake have paid the difference between the passage money, and then we would have in a moment been transferred from low fellows into gentlemen. The mate and the male passengers, with two negresses slept in the cabin below. Mark the difference of situation, these negresses, mere servants, had their victuals sent to them; we had to go for ours; besides they were used like princesses compared with us, both on deck and below.

Knowing the nature of men in general, and more particularly in the West Indies, I had resolved to pass myself for an officer; for were they to know that I had been fourteen years in the British army, and eight of it in the East Indies, and yet only one step above a private soldier, the most unfavourable opinion must have been formed of me, which would have barred all my hopes of bettering myself. So I

took it upon me to pass myself for an officer in one of the Ceylon regiments, as I knew the names of all the officers in it, and all about its formation ; when my commissions were asked for, I had only to say I had left them in England lest I might lose them in my rambles ; and the reason I would assign for my not having half-pay was, I had resigned on account of bad health, and so angered my father, which was the cause of all my present difficulties. But never let any man swerve from the truth, nor pass himself for any other than he really is, if he would avoid a thousand disagreeable and humbling situations, however tempting the circumstances may be, or apparent the necessity which a false shame may urge ; for often after this, I have regretted it, and acknowledged to myself, that Bombardier Alexander would have been a far more honourable and agreeable title than Officer Alexander, kept up by a series of equivocations and indirect falsehoods. But after having once departed from the line of rectitude it was ruin to return, and a path strewn with thorns to proceed. It was not until I returned again to England in 1822, that I ever walked about, or met a military-looking man face to face with confidence.

Yet every one who saw me never took me to have been any thing but an officer.

Although these low-minded cabin passengers scorned to speak to me, nay passed me in the vessel like Moguls, they stooped to catechise the boy about who I was, what I had been? and what I was going to do in Martinique? To their questions he answered, that I had been an officer in the army, and that he was put under my charge. He was too prudent to satisfy them farther. The poor boy's spirits were much sunk before we reached Funchall, but he was too proud to complain. The ship's fare was very poor, lean beef as salt as pickle, with biscuit, being the chief diet, and only water to drink, so bad neither of us could use it until urged by extreme thirst. We had soup twice a-week which we could not use, and once a-week about half-a-dozen potatoes handed down to us by the black cook. Had it not been for the little sea store we had laid in, we must have been starved. We were both very unwell, I from my old complaints, and the lad from the sudden change of diet. Thus had he in the offset a taste of those misfortunes he wished to see. His time was too much spent in grieving and wish-

ing, which rendered my situation very unpleasant as we were perfectly idle and unhappy. The mate would not so much as allow him to enter the under cabin ; as for me I never attempted it ; they had often words, and I was invariably brought into the altercation, for we were most rascally used. On one occasion my blood rose at the indignities offered to us ; young Romeo, the Portuguese, lost a case of instruments, and went all about in a childish manner, inquiring if any one had seen them, which bred a great disturbance on board. The mate at once went to the captain for leave to search the trunks of the passengers,—by which he meant only the unfortunate steerage passengers,—to which the captain very properly would not consent ; but the mate was not content, when I for the first time went up to him, and in a determined manner rebuked him for his insolence, saying, why did he impute such a thing to us, and not rather insist upon searching the two negroes, who were as likely as we were to do such a thing. I added, that it was a disgrace in him to bring a reproach upon his colour, by his bare insinuation, that we had not the smallest objection to be searched, provided every one on board were made

liable to the same, and that perhaps the case only had been laid aside by the young man, who was very careless about his things. He became calm when he saw I took up the matter so warmly as I did, and the search was no more spoken about; the instruments, however, were never found; the crew strongly suspected the mate himself, and that all this fuss was only pretence. During our short stay at Funchall, we went to board with one Brien O'Brien; the agreement was two dollars each per day, for lodgings, breakfast, dinner, and supper, with a bottle of Madeira at dinner, and another at supper, the price of a bottle being at this time 2s. 6d. on the island. About eight years before it had been visited by a dreadful storm of wind and rain which had washed away the soil, and many of the people had perished; the wine had continued at this high price ever since.

Buonaparte had been off the island a short time before, but a strong gale blowing for the two or three days he was there, the vessels never came to an anchor. This was all the topic of discourse at the time, and the inhabitants said he had brought the furnace of hell with him.

Before we again sailed we laid in some sea stock, but not sufficient for the run we had before us, and took our fresh departure on the 29th. There came on board here a Mr. Wharton from Funchall. After our departure things daily became worse ; the mate had taken some unaccountable aversion to my companion ; and when any article was amissing, which was sometimes the case, such as onions and little things that the captain and he had laid in for a venture, he boldly charged us, which wounded my feelings and irritated the poor boy, who ever reflected upon me in many ways, particularly how much he had done for me. Still no suspicion fell on the two negroes ; and when in my defence I alluded to them, it only increased his anger. Determined not to submit longer, I kept watch and caught them in the fact ; no more was said to us, and as little to these black thieves.

My health sunk very fast, and young G—— fell off much in his appearance before we reached our destination. Mine was caused by a harassed mind, for my prospects were very poor even when I reached my destination,—all my dependance being on the young man, who, during the passage, was

much inclined to throw me off.—But I detain my reader too long on this gloomy voyage. It so happened that a few days before we made Barbadoes, the mate became very friendly and communicative. I thought there was some design in this as we were so near the land, and I had threatened to employ a lawyer to recover expenses for the deficiency of allowance, and the manner in which we had been treated ; but I found him sincere and a true friend. He had become disgusted at the overbearing conduct of the aristocracy on board, for when at meals they never spoke to him, and gave him many slights ; in bitterness he poured out his mind to me. His opinion of them was worse even than my own, but more so of the captain than any of them, and he advised me strongly to abide by my resolution to prosecute, and he would be a cheerful witness for us, and had no doubt I would get the half of our passage-money back. This was a revolution in our wooden city much in my favour. Mr. Wharton, after questioning my comrade, made up to me, inquiring what I meant to follow after in Martinique ; but I was too old a traveller to make him much the wiser, although he amused me with lofty and

unsolicited offers of his kindness and services when we arrived there, and spoke largely of his influence amongst the planters, and his ability to do me a good office. I thanked him civilly, but had little faith in his pompous assurances. Indeed the mate told me he knew him well, he was only a blower, and would either deny all he said, or affect not to know me, as soon as we went ashore.—To cut short : we got sight of Barbadoes on the evening of the 17th October, and next morning, at eight o'clock, we arrived at Bridgetown. I walked the deck by myself, my thoughts in a chaos of confusion, looking first to the country, than to myself, time after time. The period since my last leaving, appeared to me like a long and hideous dream, but the dreadful reality of my present situation drove me nearly to despair. I almost resolved to end my wayward lot by leaping from the deck where I stood. Nothing but the most cheerless prospect was before me ; my conversations with the mate had served to dissipate the hopes with which I had left England. I was loath to believe him, but too late found that his information was correct. He ad-

vised me to return to England again if it was in my power, as the West Indies were completely changed since I had been there ; that there was a prejudice against strangers, and particularly against those who were up in years ; that none of the planters would employ them if a boy could be got, unless they were known in the country, and many other facts that shall be told in the course of my narrative. I walked and gazed in this kind of stupor until I became nearly blind, and went below to be out of sight of the shore, and, if possible, free from my own reflections. So highly wrought were my feelings, that on young G—— saying something to me in his usual thoughtless way, I was seized with a paroxysm and hurried away by a gust of passion ; my looking-glass by chance caught my eye ; I snatched it up and dashed it into a thousand pieces against the side of the vessel. The boy looked aghast and terrified at the cast of countenance my passion had made me assume, then shrunk from me, while I stood as if bereft of reason ; my kind but thoughtless friend at length came to me, saying, he meant not to wound my feelings, quite

the reverse, and assured me he would share his last halfpenny with me, and abide by me until something did cast up for one or other of us.

We then prepared to go on shore, and while there lodged in the American Tavern. I walked up to the garrison by myself, where I saw some of the Royal Artillery I had known in Island Bridge. I immediately shrunk back lest I should be recognised; this was the first disagreeable feeling I had from my assumed title. Mr. Wharton was now busy preparing his cargo of wine, which he meant to dispose of in Antigua, Guadaloupe, and Martinique. The boy and I called upon him to inquire the time of his departure; he was by no means so free as he had been on board; however he desired us to get our passports out. In a day or two afterwards I met him in the street, when he hung down his head and shunned me. We had to take two free people with us to pass their words we were not in debt, before we got our passports, which cost us half-a-guinea each. We went on board in the evening, when the schooner Mr. Wharton had hired to carry his wine was ready to sail. I went below to see after some of my articles, when I came

on deck again I found young G—— in the cuddy in conversation with Wharton, the captain, and passengers; this rather surprised me. Again I went below, and soon after heard the mate calling for me, fore and aft. I remained below not being pleased I was not invited into the cuddy as well as my charge. I became uneasy, and went on deck to cast myself in the way, when instantly Wharton came out of the cuddy as if in a great bustle, and began a long story about the great quantity of business he had on hand; he was sorry he could not take me with him, that I was too old for a situation in the West Indies, and therefore he did not know if he could, with all his interest, get me one, but that he would take the boy off my hands, speaking all the time as if he were doing me a great favour. My circumstances being desperate, I said in reply, that I would be willing to go into any situation he could procure for me. He began another long story, shuffling and insulting me by his remarks, when I turned round on my heel, and said, “Well, well—say no more.” He began again, and said, very loud, he must recant all his former promises, &c.; when I cried impatiently “Stop, stop

—enough, enough.” He then wheeled about, leaving me in no enviable frame of mind ; but my true and generous adventurer came to me in the greatest concern ; he was truly sorry for me, and I believe would have staid, but I urged him to go, as his stay could only injure him without being of any benefit to me. He generously went below, and returned bringing six guineas, which he gave to me, and soon after left us in Mr. Wharton’s schooner. I saw him depart with regret, for I really loved him ; I have never seen him since. My evil destiny has never enabled me to repay him, but if it ever is in my power it is a debt I will discharge.

Thus, in the evening of the 22d October, I was again alone for a time. Mr G. and I were to meet in Martinique as soon as the *Busiris* arrived. In a day or two after this the captain and mate quarrelled. In his anger the mate told him I was the only gentleman on board from England, and the worst used ; in a little after the captain came and ordered me on shore, and not to return to the vessel again. I instantly demanded what he meant by such an order, as we had not yet got to the end of our voyage. To my horror and surprise, he told

me flatly he did not care where my voyage would terminate, but I should sail no farther in his vessel, unless I paid anew for the run to Martinique ; and, in a taunting manner, desired me to look at the receipt he had given me at Gravesend ; he had fulfilled all he was bound to by it, for I was now in the West Indies, and to get out of the vessel immediately. Thus troubles came thick upon me. I immediately went on shore and took a cheap lodging, doing all in my power to obtain a situation of one kind or another in vain ; from every quarter I heard the most unfavourable accounts of the state of trade in the West India islands, and that it would be folly in me to go to Martinique or any other of the islands, for situations were not to be had ; all advised me to go to Demerara. Only my friend, the mate, who was both liberal and kind to me, strongly advised me to return. I had no inclination to do this, but I must bend to circumstances. At his suggestion I wrote a memorial and petition to Lieutenant Barker, R. N. agent for the transports here, for a passage home, engaging to do any thing in my power. When I delivered my letter, he received me in the most polite

and gentlemanly manner, and after some little conversation on the present state of my affairs, he, in the kindest manner, said he would procure me a passage home if possible, and desired me to call on Tuesday at his office. I then returned to Bridgetown. My mind was much tossed by the multitude of counsel I got ; all thought it was a pity to go back so soon, and recommended my trying Demerara ; but I could not fix. I called, as requested, at Lieutenant Barker's office, he had been on board the *Busiris* inquiring after me, and had got an excellent character of me from Mr. Curtis, the mate. He was most kind and civil ; and told me he had procured me a passage home, and given the captain of the vessel directions accordingly, and all I would have to do would be to issue out the spirits and provisions to the people ; that I would be placed on the ship's books, and have wages until my arrival in England, that I might go on board when I chose ; for such unmerited kindness I returned him my best thanks, and left him to go on board ; but my evil destiny prevailed. It was dire necessity alone that made me think for one moment of returning, for my prospects were as bad in London as in the

West Indies, all my thoughts centred in Carriacou. It was the hope of ultimately reaching it with some shadow at least of respectability that sustained me in all my sufferings ; the mate alone urged me to return, all others to get to Demerara. While standing on the wharf on the 27th October, 1815, the Captain of the brig Bridget, then on the point of sailing for Demerara, addressed me, she was hove up, and all ready. I had been in his company before ; he asked if I had got my passport, and was a sober man, I replied, certainly I was ; he then looked at it and said it would do, that my appearance was in my favour, and he would take me with him ; being well acquainted in the colony, he could get me a situation, as sobriety was every thing there, and all through the West Indies ; that I was but a young man yet, and there was no fear of my doing well enough. I said I would go at once in the steerage ; he said he would take me for three guineas, and that I might stay in the Bridget until I got a situation. This offer suiting my views more than any other, I immediately embraced it ; the ship was under weigh, so hurrying my scanty wardrobe into a boat, I got on board, and set sail, regret-

ting much the short warning I had, as it disabled me from writing to my kind benefactor Lieutenant Barker, to explain the cause of my sudden departure ; even to my friend, Mr Curtis, the mate of the *Busiris*, I could not say farewell.

CHAPTER V.

Residence in Demerara until joining the Patriotic Armies at Angustura.

ON the 31st we made Georgetown, Demerara ; next day I went on shore, reported myself to the Governor's secretary, and got my ticket of residence ; then to the fiscal's office where it was countersigned, and my name entered in his books ; I then went on board the brig. Mr. White, the captain, was even better to me than he had promised, for he said, in a friendly manner, " Alexander, I suppose your dollars are not too plentiful, there is no occasion for you to go on shore, until something is done for you ;" he also advised me to prefer a cotton estate to a sugar or coffee one, the duties being easier learned, and much less fatigue attending it ; and in the course of two or three years, he

said I might get to be a manager, by taking care, and be easy, and comfortable enough.

In a few days he was as good as his word, and obtained for me a situation on a cotton estate near Mahaica Creek, on the east coast, called Potters Employ. The manager's name was Hughes, a Welchman. I felt completely happy, and anticipated that fortune was now going to take a new turn and cease to persecute me. I retired to my hammock in the best frame of mind I had done for many years. My kind and good friend gave me the following wholesome instructions at my departure ; I shall repeat them here, as they will give a better idea of this colony than a more lengthened description.

“ Alexander, you must pay strict attention to what I recommend, if you wish to succeed in this strange colony. You will be much watched and looked after in all your movements and demeanour as an overseer, for it is but an inferior and humble station ; an overseer is not looked upon here better than a footman in England, and not so well used, yet it is the first step to better employment. The manager of one year's standing, will cause his over-

seer, although his equal a few months before, to stand in his presence hat in hand, to receive his orders ; but this is the fashion of the place, and now you are aware of it. You must not laugh too much on any account, and beware of talking much ; always speak as little as possible. Silence is a great qualification in an overseer. And though I mention this last, it is of the greatest importance, do not drink too much, even if you are pressed in the most urgent manner, for they will do so to try you. Do not drink upon any account early in the day, and when you do take a glass of grog, do not make it strong, as it is drunk weak here. It will not save you from the name of drunkard, your never being the worse of liquor ; if you fail in any of these rules you are ruined in Demerara, if once drunkard is added to your name. But if once you are manager, you may do as you please ; for your character is established, and the same circumspection is no longer necessary. Yet care is required even then. But as you are no boy, you will be able to look better to what I say, and keep a sharp lookout ; you must not mention, if possible, your having come from London, or having been in the army,

or a traveller, or having been in the East Indies, or they will think you are too knowing for them, and therefore they will not employ you; for implicit obedience is expected from every one, in every order given, no matter what that order may be." Had I been this good seaman's own child, he could not have been more anxious for my welfare; yet he knew nothing of my history, but that I was poor and without friends in a strange country.

During this salutary advice, the mule arrived on which I was to ride to my employ. I mounted and left Georgetown in the morning. I thought, as I paced along, of the traveller riding to Strasburg. This was a most disagreeable journey to me before it was concluded, for the boy who brought the mule stopped behind upon some business or other, and left me alone with the perverse animal, and without any knowledge of the road I was to pursue. I was forced to trust to the mule himself; when I mounted he would not move one step, until he was well flogged and coaxed by the boy that brought it; at length it moved off in a slow sulky manner, until we came opposite the garrison, when all at once it set off as quick as it

could run up to the left side of the trench, when it stopped as suddenly as it had bolted before, by which I was thrown forward upon its neck, my head hanging down. The stirrup-leather, old and rotten gave way, and down I came saddle and all to the ground, on the crown of my head, and in spite of my efforts rolled into the trench; fortunately for me it was the dry season. As I fell, the mule kicked at me in a furious manner; I escaped unhurt and clean, but was forced to go into the garrison and get the mule's furniture mended, for which I paid a dollar, and then mounted again. It was the cross-est animal I ever saw, often running into the plantations, maugre all my efforts, by which I was detained on the road until four o'clock in the afternoon. I had attempted to lead it, but it would neither lead nor drive. I had sat for some time, leaving it to its own discretion, when it quietly turned to my right. I now began to anticipate an end to my fatigue and vexation. Long before I came to the house, I saw Hughes looking at me with a telescope; at length I dismounted, quite worn out with my vexatious ride.

Mr. Hughes shook hands, and received me very politely, glad to see me, and so on. The table was

already covered; soon after the dinner was called in, it being latter than usual on my account. When I explained to him the cause of my delay, he laughed very heartily. I now began upon my trials, for without joining in it, he did all in his power to extort conversation, but I was on my guard; yet without appearing rude, I could not but answer him; and a yes or no, could apply only to a very few of his artful questions. He seemed much pleased to hear me speak. There was a something in his looks that said he did not like my appearance; but what it was, whether my age or not, I could not say; I rather think he thought before he saw me, I had been a young lad like the overseer he had. Much as I was on my guard in fencing his questions, I was entrapped by his cunning; for it appeared to me quite plain that he was not satisfied with my guarded answers. While we were eating, he threw a capsicon pod to me, saying, these are the cherries of this country. Not aware of the trick, I cut it up, and eat it with my food as I had done a hundred times before, as free and easy as they did themselves, without question or inquiry; both their eyes were fixed on me all the time.

“Oh! oh!” says Hughes, “you know how to eat our cherries.” “Yes, sir, they grow in different latitudes.” “But only in warm countries.” I replied, “That is what I mean, sir.” “So,” says he, “you’re a traveller.” I immediately saw my error, for I was assailed by a world of questions which I did not choose to answer, while they both were all anxiety to know every particular of my melancholy history. I never was more awkwardly situated in my life until we rose from table. As the overseer was rising, Hughes requested him to be seated and take a glass of wine; we obeyed him. I knew not whether to accept or refuse, for I was anxious not to err in the line of instruction I had got. Just a little after, Hughes says, “Take that gentleman and shew him over the estate.” I was much surprised to be hurried on business in this manner, but I afterwards discovered it was a plot laid against me by them; for instead of shewing me the estate, or giving me any useful information, the overseer commenced a long string of inquiries, to sift me further. His questions were so direct I could not evade them, without exciting suspicions to my disadvantage much worse than the truth;

for it was evident that he was set on by the manager to sift me. I had no alternative but either to lie under any surmise they might choose to form, or to tell a little of my former life. The latter was what I did, but it afterwards hurt me much in this gossiping tittle-tattling colony. At length the sun went down, and I was relieved from their impertinent scrutiny. Had they been officers of police, and I a suspected criminal, greater ingenuity could not have been resorted to to obtain knowledge of my history. At our return it was quite dark; we then had a cup of coffee, and retired, I quite happy that I was once more in employ, and grateful to Captain White for his kindness. But here I was to have no rest, for my hammock was as rotten as the mule's furniture. The moment I lay down it gave way, and I was forced to lie all night on the hard floor, with my right and left arm alternately under my head. Before daylight in the morning I was called up; got a cup of coffee, and went to the field with my colleague and tormentor; for until the breakfast hour his interrogatories never ceased; they were often both rude and impert-

nent,—but poverty makes the spirit bend to many things.

At length we were called to breakfast, which consisted of salt meat, salt fish, and roasted plantains, with nothing but water to drink. It astonished me much in such a warm climate to have salt provisions alone, more like a sailor's breakfast at sea than one on shore. I took very little, as I knew my thirst would be great. I inquired if there was nothing else, and if this was the usual breakfast, and was answered it was the regular breakfast. The manager's liquor chest stood open as if on purpose, when, to prevent thirst, I desired the boy to mix a little spirits and water for me ; he looked in surprise at the overseer, and did it with reluctance, I thinking no harm. We then turned out, and the heat of the day beginning to rise, my thirst became excessive ; there was only ditch-water to drink, thick and offensive ; the great heat, and the quantity of this foul water I had drunk, made me quite sick.

The slaves at work, the plantations around, all brought to my mind the first period of my outset in

life. The contrast was too much for my feelings. At this moment a boy came to my fellow overseer, saying, "Massah want to speak to him," and, to my great relief, he left me alone for a short time; when, to my surprise, I saw him running to me as if the colony had been on fire; he then said he was sorry to tell me that Mr. Hughes would not require my services on the estate, as the owners had sent out a young man, who had just arrived in Georgetown. I felt so shocked at this piece of news that I was forced to go aside, for my sickness fairly overcame me. I soon felt greatly relieved, and much discourse passed between us. I at length said, "I may as well leave the field;" when he replied, "Yes, as the young man will be up to-morrow."

At my return I saw Hughes, who pretended to be sorry for the trouble I had been put to, and said the boy was going down to town to bring up my successor before night, and the same boy would take me down. I remained until next morning. I beg pardon for being so particular in this my first situation; for it is not one of the worst, neither one of the best, but may answer as a specimen of

the others, with which I shall not again detain the reader.

On my return, the mule began his old tricks with me ; but I gave it up about half-way, rather than fight with him. The negro being with me, as soon as he mounted, away they went ; no vice appeared in him then.

In the forenoon, I returned to town, weary and dispirited, and wet to the skin, for it had rained a great part of the way. After getting breakfast, I went on board to my benefactor, who was both surprised and grieved to see me, and to hear that I was not required. As he had heard of no vessel's arrival, so he concluded, as I had done before, that it was only a pretext to get rid of me ; but losing this place was not the worst, for Hughes got up a false story to my disadvantage, and his own justification, which lost me the support of my worthy friend.

His first inquiry was, if anything had happened amiss ; I replied nothing that I was aware of. He appeared quite at a loss, and ended by saying he would see Hughes in a few days. I remained on board, going often into the town, striving to get

acquainted, and making every inquiry for a situation ; likewise, every time the boat went up the river, going in her, and making inquiries among the sugar plantations on the west side of the river, but I could hear of nothing. This was a most unpleasant thing ; but my necessities left me no choice. I was often laughed at, slighted and despised, and questioned in the rudest manner, without feeling or delicacy ; and this too mostly by my countrymen, some of whom were most ungentlemanly and openly abusive of me, and complimentary to themselves. One evening in particular, as a sample of the rest, I called at a coffee estate, the name of the manager of which was Fraser ; there was another Scotsman along with him. At my approach to the house to make my humble inquiry, both sat still and began to loll on their seats, as if to shew how exalted and much at their ease they were. The attack begun by their asking in a supercilious manner,

“ What part of England are you from, eh ? ”

“ I am a Scotsman.” At this answer they looked confused and hurt.

“ I do not believe you are a Scotsman ; you only would make me believe so, eh ! ”

“ I really am from Scotland. ”

“ Well, from what part, pray ? ”

“ From Glasgow, sir. ”

“ What have you been ? You are rather old I think to be a new comer. ”

“ In the army, sir. ”

“ Well, I thought so by your looks. What were you in it, pray ? ”

“ An officer, sir. ”

“ Of course ; you army fellows are all officers when you come here. What was the name of your regiment ? ”

Thus in this insolent manner did his questions run on,—If I had half-pay ; the cause of my not having it ; where I sailed last from ; what vessel I was in, and every question he could think of, during which time I stood on my feet, while he and his companion sat at their ease : I felt quite angry and ashamed, yet restrained my contempt for their want of delicacy and humanity, as night was drawing on, and I wanted a place in which to sleep, and im-

agined he wished to employ me, his questions were so minute. But I knew not the disposition of these men so well at this time as I afterwards learned them to my sorrow, for all was done to gratify a vulgar and idle curiosity.

Thus, in the vain hope of obtaining an invitation to pass the night, for it was now sun-down, I civilly answered his questions to Amen, when, fairly tired, as I had long been, he stretched himself back on his seat, in a pompous manner, saying, "No doubt, you count yourself a gentleman; I wish you and every army fellow were a great deal worse off than you are." My blood boiled in my breast; but, alas! I had no means of redress in my power. Astonished to see so much want of feeling and indelicacy, I walked away, heartily despising the men who could exult in another's misery, and taunt him in the midst of suffering.

There were a few exceptions to characters such as these; but, alas! they bore a small proportion. During this disgusting scene Fraser never spoke, either to bid me sit down, or stop all night. When I left them it was almost dark. I wandered melancholy from this unhospitable roof, and lay all

night in the open air ; to sleep was impossible, the musquitoes annoyed me so much. Next day I held my weary way amongst the plantations, suffering similarly as I had done before ; but I did not answer so fully as I had done Fraser's companion. When night came I had not where to lay my head ; a negro watchman in pity directed me to a carpenter's shed in the plantation he was on, and there I lay on the hard boards, annoyed by the musquitoes, until about four o'clock in the morning, when another negro man, who I think was a driver, came and saw me. He gave the watchman a severe reproof for allowing me to come there ; the humane negro said,

Negro. He a poor buckerah, and have no place to sleep, and me allow him go der and lie down, he look good, sober, and quiet, he do no bad.

Driver. Buckerah or no buckerah, you wrong ; and if massa know, you get good flog.

The parley lasted for some time between them, during which I felt in all its force how much I had fallen when I was an object of compassion to a poor slave. At length the driver turned to me, saying, " I keep you, massa, here, till massa rise,

and take you before him ;” this he said not in an affected manner, but quite cool and firmly. I did not wish this upon any account, and appealed to him, saying, I was from on board ship, and a stranger just come from England, and did not know the fashions of the country, and had come on shore to look about me ; and having no place to sleep, was waiting there until the gun fired to cross the ferry, and begged him not to do as he said, for it would detain me. The gun was fired while I spoke, and the good-natured African desired me to go. I immediately suspected I was on a Scotsman’s estate, and inquired. The reply was as I thought, “ Yes, massa, a tingy Kotchman.” I made the best of my way off the plantation, least I should be seen by the master, just as if I had done some great harm.

I crossed the river at its mouth, which is very broad, then hired a boat, and went on board for the last time ; for in the morning when I saw the kind and humane Captain White, he was quite changed, but more of sorrow than anger appeared in his countenance ; and when he heard what I had to say, he replied he was grieved that his endeavours had turned out so ill, and inquired what I

meant to do. What answer to give I really knew not, for I was sorely vexed at having come to Demerara, and he was equally so at having brought me, and said I was welcome on board at any time.

I now applied to the captain of the London packet for a passage home, but could not obtain it; then to the captain of the *Espeigle* Spanish brig-of-war, which was soon going to England, offering to do any thing I could on board, but failed also. I was now as ill off as ever, my little money was getting fast out of my possession; a guinea here only went for four dollars, and Georgetown filled with a race of people, every one on the catch, and I a stranger.

Thus was I completely aground again, without hope of extricating myself, when I was reduced once more to my last dollar, and nothing before me but despair, for I had tried everywhere in vain; such is the constitution of society in this wretched colony, for strange as it may appear, my very efforts to be employed were against me getting any employment. I had, by running all about so much, become conspicuous, and was marked down as a wanderer or unsettled individual; once I was seized as a spy,

and very harshly treated, until I shewed my ticket of residence. In fact, I had met with nothing but ill-usage and insult, and never left my lodgings without my ticket in my pocket. When all hopes had fled, it pleased God once more to open for me a door of deliverance, by being introduced to a Mr. Thomas Thompson, merchant in Pittman and Ashley Square, Cumingsburg, Georgetown, who civilly offered to mess me at his house until I got into employment. By his assistance I tried all the east coast, when my benefactor said he feared I was too old to be employed—not too old a man, but too old to be taken as an overseer—and would not succeed in that colony, for the managers wished for none but boys, whom they could use as they liked: This was poor comfort for me.

Mr. Thompson had once been a sergeant in the Foot Guards, and my being “an army fellow,” was my passport with him; for the good old man was a soldier every inch of him, and never was so happy as when recounting his feats in Holland with the good Duke of York. His wife was an old campaigner, and loved a soldier as well as her husband. He was the only out-and-out British patriot I ever

conversed with in the colony ; his house was always a home to me during my stay. We styled his house the pilgrim's rest : he was known by the name of the pilgrim's protector, as his doors were never closed against a friendless Briton when out of employ. At his suggestion I wrote a memorial and petition to his Excellency Major-General John Murray, Governor of the United colony of Demerara and Essequibo : I carried this myself, and had an interview with him. I was agreeably surprised at the humane and kindly manner in which he received me. He talked with me for a considerable time, and very properly requested to see my commission. I felt myself blush, as I said I had left it at home lest it might be lost, not thinking I should have any use for it in the West Indies, but I showed the Duke of York and Colonel Macnab's letters. He behaved like a real gentleman to me in this interview, was modest and civil, and asked no more questions than were necessary on such an occasion ; such as if I had half-pay, and the cause of my leaving the army. I told him the story I had made up, during which he looked hard at me, and inquired what had been the nature of my request to his

Royal Highness, when I told him it was to be commissioned in any of the native regiments. He said he was sorry there was nothing in his power at the present time, as he wished to give every encouragement to any stranger that came to the colony, but I might call again in a few days. I sincerely thanked him, and bade him adieu with feelings of greater respect for him than for any other gentleman I had ever known.

I felt very uncomfortable during this interview, conscious I was imposing on a General in the British army ; besides, my danger in going near the garrison was great, for there was a company of artillery there, and I knew not whose they were. On my return from the Governor, I found a Mr. Cameron, carpenter on Plantation Richmond, Essequibo, who was to return to that place in the morning. Mr. Thompson spoke to him in my behalf ; he kindly agreed to take me with him in the Plantation schooner, to look about among the plantations ; and if no situation occurred, I could call on the Governor when I came back. On my arrival I was extremely well used by the manager of the estate, Mr. Pearson ; he sent me to Mr. Ousley, manager

of Plantation Hope, who was in want of an overseer. The distance was five or six miles up the river; away I trudged, heartless and faint, for my spirits were quite sunk by repeated disappointments. I met several white men on horseback, who passed me as usual, the same as if I had been a negro, for in this colony, a foot passenger is an object of contempt. I reached my destination about twelve o'clock, while Mr. Ousley was at breakfast, with his carpenter and one overseer. He was more complacent to me than any I had yet called upon, asked me to come in, and inquired if I had had breakfast. I replied I had. Thinking he was at dinner, I observed, he dined early. The planter's breakfast is generally at 11 o'clock, as the negroes then come in from the field, and turn out again at one o'clock to avoid the heat of the day. He civilly informed me they had been busy this forenoon. A number of the usual questions were put in a civil way, when I told him my business. He said he had only lately come to the estate himself, that two overseers were the compliment, and he had only one in the meantime; that a young man had just arrived from Ireland, for the estate, and was then in town, and

coming with the sloop which he expected every day ; but as he was sorry to see a genteel-looking man going about in quest of employment, and the more so, as they were apt to be looked down upon, though it was common in the colony, and could not be agreeable to myself. I was welcome to remain with him until the sloop came from town, when if the young man did not come, he would with pleasure give me the situation ; and if he did come, I was welcome to remain for a time until the sloop returned, when I could go with her. I could scarce believe I heard him aright, so much had I been used to conduct the very reverse of this. I could not find words to thank him. He voluntarily said he would use his influence to get me a situation, in the meantime, as there were plenty of my countrymen who had plantations in the neighbourhood with whom I might get acquainted. This was a joyous invitation to me. It was eight days before the sloop came up, during which there was no abatement of his civility.

This part of Essequibo is called the Arabian Coast ; and the Hope estate, upon which I was, belonged to Messrs. Rose and Croal, merchants in

Georgetown. When the sloop arrived there was no young man, he having gone on a cotton estate in preference to a sugar one. Mr. Ousley at once engaged me at 800 guilders a year, to be found at table, but nothing else, and dated my engagement from the day of my arrival, as I had done all in my power to be useful on the estate. This was a favour to me of no small magnitude.

The commencement was the 4th December 1815; I now got on with a cheerful heart, quite delighted I had at last found employment. I was not the less pleased, as I preferred a sugar to a cotton estate. When my trunks returned by the sloop from town, I found that the best of my books and shirts had been stolen, which lightened my trunks a second time since I left Glasgow, first in London, now in Demerara.

The Hope was a new estate just changing from cotton to sugar; the first strike of sugar was taken during my stay; every thing was new and strange to me in all respects. The machinery was worked by a steam engine, and great preparations were making for a distillery of rum. All was bustle and activity; the time passed happily on, as everything was agree-

able to me. After twelve months of suffering and vicissitude, I could not but reflect upon the strange nature of my life, I had eat my Christmas dinner a bombardier in the artillery, in Island Bridge,—I was now going to eat my next a field overseer on Plantation Hope, Arabian Coast, Essequibo, united colony of Demerara. But to proceed:—

Mr. Ousley had the character of being the best planter in the colony, and indeed deserved it, for no manager I ever saw had so good a way of governing his slaves, and making them obey him, and not dislike him at the same time. He had the knack of making every one fear him, from his housekeeper down to the black boy that waited at table, overseers and all; he was quick in his movements, loud in his talk, and very abusive. I heard while under him the strangest oaths and most *outrè* expressions I had ever heard before or since, either amongst soldiers or sailors. He was irascible in his temper, and had a peculiar manner of displaying it. He was hard to please, almost incessantly shouting, cursing, and flogging, which began the moment he rose in the morning, nor ceased until he lay down at night; and thus he continued every day the

same, Sunday and Saturday, all were alike. The foulest language was used to the negroes both in the field, the boiling-house, and the hospital, and to the domestics even at table, for he was very severe with the whole, but the drivers were especially most severely punished, often with 100 lashes. The two drivers were made to flog each other, and then flog the people, even the domestics. The boys he flogged himself with a cow's skin,* and he often struck and flogged the whole of them. A fine stout young negro, his own property, whom he employed as a house-servant, was rendered quite heartless and unhappy. He came to me one day and requested me to buy him ; alas ! I had not as much cash as would have bought a rabbit. When offended with any of us white people, he then fell foul of his domestics, and had strange ways of making it bear upon us. Once the carpenter and we two overseers had a droll exhibition : one day there were no limes at table, and he fell foul of the domestics in an outrageous manner. After tiring himself, he looked in a peculiar manner at us, and called to the black

* A West India term for a whip of cow's hide.

boy who attended, "I wonder why you do not order them to come to you, instead of you going to them; here, you fellow, go to the door and order them to come to you." The boy reluctantly went to the door, waved his hand, and bawled out, "Limes, halo! Limes, come here, come massa want you, come, wont you come, come, d—— you, come, if you no come for me, you surely come for massa." At this we all burst out into laughter, housekeeper and all, for she sat near us; but we felt far from happy, although we laughed, for it was some one of us he aimed at in this unaccountable manner.

Besides flogging he had other methods of punishing delinquents dancing, or what was called dancing, was common to the poor old women, the nurses and cooks of the hospital, who, too infirm to work, were in these easier duties invalided, and still rendered useful. These he would cause to be kept dancing for half or three quarters of an hour, he, himself, standing over them with his tongue, giving them a cut with his cow's skin now and then, and an oath, shewing them how to throw out their feet, and so on. At times we were left in charge of

them, until their time expired, and he would walk away.

He never flogged any of his negroes for running away, he punished them by placing them in the stocks, and stopping their rum for a time. Every Sunday morning, the runaways, if there were any, were brought out, when the week's allowance was served, and placed upon a broad board, elevated upon the head of two water vats, and exposed to the gaze and derision of the whole gang, who were ordered by the manager to point and hoot at them, and shew every manner of contempt, calling them runaways, which they little regarded; but I shall further on shew that it is next to impossible for a slave to run quite away in Demerara.

As I mentioned before, he had the complete knack of commanding and humouring the negroes, and availing himself of all their foibles, affections, and antipathies. He could both thwart and cajole them at the same time; and thus he went through more and better work than any other planter with a gang of the same strength. For I now saw plainly that the manners and dispositions of the negroes

were completely changed since I had been first amongst them, fifteen years before. At this time it was required in an overseer, to know the ways and manners of the negroes, their different dispositions, then to govern them, and carry on the work to the greatest advantage. It was a rule instilled into all new comers who meant to follow the planting line, "Study the dispositions of your negroes, or you will never succeed;" whereas, at my arrival in Carriacou, Mr. Stewart and others said to me, "Let the negroes know your disposition and manners, and they will know how to obey you." It was quite the reverse now, for we overseers had to go great lengths in humouring them, or little and bad work would be done. It was a hard task to be overseer,—to please the manager and keep in with the negroes; it was really serving two masters; but this will be more evident as we proceed; now for the bright side of the picture.

Mr. Ousley never deprived the negroes upon any account of their holidays, or days of liberty and amusement; whereas many of the managers gave only Christmas and not New-year's-day, or New-year's-day and not Christmas; he gave them

both as the days came, nor did he turn them out the following day at the usual hour, as others did, but gave them the day after, both to rest and enjoy themselves, and did not commence work until seven o'clock on the third morning, instead of five, the usual hour. In this there was good policy, and a great saving of time to the estate, as they cannot be expected to work, after a day spent in mirth and jollity, which is, in my opinion, the most severe labour, as towards evening they appear quite spent, for they exert themselves in a manner quite surprising to a European. At their rejoicing and dances, it is absolutely necessary for all the white people on the estate to be present, for at times they quarrel and fight with each other in a furious manner, more like dogs than men; this in general arises from old feuds that had their rise in Africa,—for, strange to tell, nations who were at war in their own country, continue their antipathy to each other, even in slavery, taunt, and abuse each other, and are apt to fight on every occasion. Besides the policy, it pleased and humoured them, and he was for this counted a good massa; they had likewise Easter and all other holidays; when

a double allowance of spirits and other necessaries were served out, more so than I ever saw upon any other estate except Mr. Bagot's.

Mr. Ousley had an excellent manner of rearing up the children born on the estate, paying great attention to their health and cleanliness, and punishing severely any neglect in the nurses. It was for this they were made to dance. He visited all the negro huts on the property to see that they were kept clean, sound, and free from vermin, and that the negroes had their regular allowances of every thing. To the women who were pregnant he paid great attention, and treated them with unwearied humanity after delivery, more so than any manager I ever saw, and did all in his power to encourage propagation. This is now the case on every estate, but it was more judiciously done by him than on any other estate that came under my observation. He was equally careful of the brute creation; and could manage a mule or a horse as well as his negroes.

There was a custom in the colony which he very properly condemned, that of making the field overseer take his watch in the boiling-house, night and

morning, along with his fatigues in the field during the day. He said, as the head overseer's duties, during the season, were in the boiling-house, and his salary was larger than the others, his duties lay there, and the others in the field; and the one being in the field all day, it was unjust to make him take watch in the boiling-house. No doubt after the boiling season was past, the head overseer took the field, with the large or first gang of negroes, the stoutest and most healthy and best workers. At this time there are no night duties. The other two overseers have the second gang; the old and infirm negroes, before they are invalided, the convalescents, the boys and girls, dismissed domestics, tradesmen, people from coffee estates, and all such like form the small gang, and work by themselves. At times the whole negroes on an estate work in one gang; yet when I was afterwards on the Governor's estate,—and it is the same on others,—the head overseer did not take the field after the grinding was over, but went about in a promiscuous kind of way.

In all the countries in which I have been, there is always to be found some portion of its inhabitants who are not liked by their fellow countrymen; this I found

to be the lot of the Barbadians in the West Indies, of whom I shall here give a short account, as the head overseer upon the estate was a Barbadian, and consequently not liked by the manager,—and they know well that they are not liked. From my present and after experience, I found them to be proud, selfish, and stubborn, low-minded, and loquacious; they are seldom employed but by their countrymen, they themselves preferring each other to any one else. There were a great many of them of both sexes in the colony, and indeed over all the islands in the West Indies, filling all the stations of life there. They are very kind and hospitable to strangers, who, in passing, call upon them, much more so than any other people I ever met with. They are very severe to their negroes, yet are very fond of black and coloured wives, but capricious in their affections, often turning them away and taking others, and even punishing them when put away. To a proverb they are severe to their negroes, punishing them in various ways, even to barbarity, seemingly, as it were, guided by caprice; for at times they will be too free and jocular with them, and soon after go to the other extreme; yet strange

to say the negroes obey them better and respect them more than us from Europe ; but they do the same with all the Creole whites in the West Indies. They differ in features and colour from people born in England as well as in accent and pronunciation, and they have a drawling manner of speaking. They keep a good table, and can do the honours of it well, as etiquette is one of their principle studies. They affect to be religious, yet are most neglectful of its duties, slighting the Sabbath-day, and every thing sanctified ; yet they will drawl out on all occasions it can be introduced, “ Yes I will, please God ; so help me God ;” this they will sing out like a parish clerk, as if they were under the influence of pious feelings.

They are very temperate, active, and industrious ; and consider themselves the best planters, merchants, and mechanics in the colonies. Of their island they are justly proud, for it is a pretty island. They call it little England, making up by their own estimation of themselves for the slights they are liable to from others. They have a saint of their own called Saint Quaco, whose day is celebrated by the Barbadians. “ As proud as a Barbadian,” is a

West India saying. Often have I laughed to hear them say, "I am neither a Carib nor a Creole, but a true Barbadian born, so help me God!"

During my stay with Mr. Ousley I was not much employed in following the negroes in the field, as the drivers having the principal charge of the work, the manager thought that the constant presence of an overseer served to hurt their influence. I was chiefly employed in gardening, and poisoning the white ants that infested the negro huts, which I did by breaking the long lines of communication which they carry along the timbers of the hut, and cover with a fine smooth firm plaster. I broke this, and with a pen filled the parts of their galleries with arsenic, and by this means killed immense numbers; for those who are alive eat those of their own kind, whom they find dead; thus did their own voracity communicate death through whole colonies to our great satisfaction, for they are very destructive to the timber, which they render hollow in a short time, like my own hopes and prospects.

I now passed my time in comparative enjoyment, thinking that fortune had ceased to persecute

me, and would now be my friend, and in a short time enable me to reach the long-wished for haven, Carriacou.

By law every stranger, a short time after his arrival in the colony, is obliged, under a penalty, to enrol himself in the militia. While on this estate I was obliged to turn out three times with arms, &c. as a private, which, to keep up my assumed character, I at first refused to do, unless in my former rank as an officer in the British army. This was foolish in me, for I was at once ordered to produce my commission by the burgher captain and adjutant of the militia; my old song of having left them at home would not do here. I shewed them Major Bridges' and Colonel Macnab's letters; they were not satisfied. I must fall in or be confined, and fined a joe every time I was absent from muster. I did duty in my blue jacket, not having a red one, and was abused by the officers for not getting one; all this rendered me most disagreeably conspicuous, which I might have avoided had I at first commenced my colonial campaign with a statement of truths. Whatever might have been the consequence it could hardly have reduced me to a worse

situation than that in which I had all along been, and I would have been free of that uneasiness which ever haunted me, arising from the suspicious questions that were often put to me. I may here mention a very awkward occurrence which took place shortly after my arrival: Being in the garrison, warm and thirsty, I called at the artillery barracks for a glass of water, not knowing what battalion was there. I found it to be Major R. S. Brough's company, which had marched from Island Bridge for Cork, and embarked for the West Indies while I was there. I knew the man who gave me the water, and heard several voices inside quite familiar to me, but I hung my head and got off unperceived by them. I was ever after as careful to avoid any of the artillery as if I had been a deserter, and I am sure my feelings were as acute at meeting them by surprise. All my care could not prevent one disagreeable rencounter. I had been persuaded by a fellow overseer to take a walk one Sunday evening, much against my inclination, towards the garrison to see the evening parade. I could not refuse lest I should create astonishment in him, and awaken suspicion that all was not right with me;

so I walked on like a criminal going to be examined. All went safe until we were leaving the garrison in the dark. I felt relieved, and we were conversing with more freedom than I had done, as my fears of discovery began to abate. Just at this moment we met two of the artillery, one of whom recognising my voice, came boldly up to me, and looking me full in the face, said he knew me quite well at first sight, but was now confirmed upon hearing my voice ; and he boldly declared that I was a deserter from the regiment. I affected to laugh at him, but was extremely concerned, yet I concealed it in the best manner I could, and as it was getting dark, this favoured me much ; my companion stepped aside and laughed heartily at the soldier. I took courage and began to accuse him of folly, and argued the point in vain, for he said, I knew him quite well, for he had often been on guard with me at the Pigeon-house ; all this was true, and a canny Scotchman he was. I firmly denied having ever seen him in my life. He made one mistake which was in my favour, for he called me Alexander Henderson ; at this my friend laughed louder than at first, and told the soldier he was greatly mistaken ;

still he would not give in, and added, as a confirmation, your name is Henderson, and you have been in Ceylon too. After much altercation, he said, I might go, but he was certain he was right, and there were many men in the garrison who would confirm what he said. I replied, I would, if he chose, go to his commanding-officer or the Governor, and satisfy them I was no deserter ; but he said, " I do not wish to hurt you, for you were always a good fellow," and thus we parted. So much for my unfortunate soldiering; go where I would, it felt as a brand upon my forehead ; but Mr. Smith, my companion, viewed the soldier as in the wrong with regard to my identity, which eased my mind.

This military service is a heavy tax upon the whites in the colony, but is absolutely necessary to keep the slaves in awe and prevent insurrections. By the laws of the colony every estate is obliged, under a penalty, to have one effective white person for every fifty slaves ; it is the duty of the burgher captain to see that this law is observed, yet there are few of the planters that strictly obey it, as they think the proportion of overseers is too great for any work to be done by the slaves. To evade the

fine, they often have white tradesmen, and free coloured people (idlers,) living upon some distant part of the estate, the most useless, if it can be converted to any thing at all ; by this means, the requisite number of persons fit for the militia is kept up, without employing more overseers than they themselves judge necessary, as the black drivers, who are always slaves, and the head people, carry on the chief part of the work on an estate.

My stay on the Hope estate was much shorter than I could have wished. The young man engaged by the owners, left the Cotton estate on the east coast, and, being sent to the Hope, I got my discharge, and returned to Georgetown on the 31st of January 1816, as destitute as ever after paying my debts ; but my good friend, Thompson, made me welcome until I should be again employed. The same misery of running all about was before me, and my spirits were very low. I again wrote to the Governor, Major-General Murray, who most politely answered my letter, and, at his suggestion, I applied to the Hon. George Bagot, then second fiscal of Essequibo, who, I was informed, wanted a clerk. This was not the case, but he engaged me as

one of his overseers, at 700 guilders a-year, on a new estate which belonged to him and the Governor, called Huis te Dirien. The next day I got a passage to Essequibo, and commenced my sojourn there, where I might have done well, as it was his wish, had it not been for some pique the manager, Mr. Potts, took at me, and began to shew even upon my arrival. But I pass over the many indignities he heaped upon me, as uninteresting to all but myself, and only give what is of interest to every one. Of all the estates in the colony, this would have been a pattern, had the views and wishes of the proprietors been followed up by their manager. To the negroes they were kind and humane. During the five months I was on the estate, the Governor visited it different times for his amusement. He took great notice of the children, and at each visit gave a holiday to the negroes, and a dance; and the overseers served out to them sugar and rum, with extra allowance of victuals for a feast. When this could not be furnished from the store, he bought the necessary supplies of pork, &c. from themselves, paying them their own price,—and a negro will never sell at a disadvantage. Mr. Bagot was equally kind.

Two men so gentlemanly and humane were not in the colony ; yet, unknown to them, their negroes were often ill-used by their manager, though it was their particular wish that the white and black people on the estate should be as happy as possible ; indeed, Mr. Bagot, who was oftenest on the estate, always spoke to, treated, and wrought his slaves as his fellow-creatures, and viewed them more as his family than anything else. His rules and regulations for their management were most excellent, had his manager walked up to them, but he seemed to take a pride in thwarting his employers, for he was ever shouting and finding fault where there was no cause, and went to the out-workers only to punish. Many were the complaints made by the slaves to Mr. B., who remonstrated with him, and expressly said, it was his wish that the work of the estate should be done with the least punishment possible. At this he would grumble and say his prerogative was taken from him, and he would leave the estate ; but this he said only to the overseers at meals. He would for a time be very affable, then begin again to storm and abuse us. He had been bred in the islands, and could not com-

mand his passions. One or two of the female slaves would come to complain to Mr. B., taking up their dress before us all to shew the severity of their punishment. The gang of negroes on this estate was the best I ever saw, well clothed, healthy, and in good condition, excellent workers, and in general docile; yet there were a few bad characters amongst them that did require punishment. It was a common expression of this Potts, after having punished, "I have laid it on, and all the governors in the world cannot take it off again." As to the number of lashes, the managers and proprietors were restricted by law, for a proprietor could only order 39 lashes, a manager two dozen, and an overseer one dozen, without being liable to be called to account. In cases requiring greater severity, the fiscal must be applied to. He is judge of the number of lashes to be inflicted for any offence; but the slaves are never severely punished save for crimes that would either hang or banish a man in England. Mr. B. being fiscal, I had an excellent opportunity of observing how matters were managed in these cases, and I really think the negroes have some advantages on their side, for

Mr. B. was ever ready to hear their just complaints, and discourage their frivolous ones, and would on no account suffer them to be punished with severity. The manager and I were often taken as witnesses, and our opinions given in these matters. Often would the negroes come in ones and twos, even up to a dozen at once, to complain to Mr. B. without any just cause, but through whim or malice. If their master was busy, when, as it sometimes happened, the fiscal was not in town, no persuasion could prevail on them to return to their own estate again, until they saw Mr. B.; not even when their masters have come for them, requesting them to come back, and they would be informed when he came home, and have leave to return with their complaints. In vain Mr. Potts would join their masters; they would not yield, but remain and linger about idle, until the fiscal's return; during which time their labour was entirely lost; and when inquiry was at length made, they had perhaps not any just cause of complaint, nor marks of punishment to shew. Yet this was not always the case, for some few negroes at times came to complain with marks of very severe pun-

ishment. This was immediately inquired into, as in such cases it was illegal, the master having the fiscal to complain to, if the offence required such severity. Mr. B. and other fiscals always tempered justice with mercy, and were not so well liked by the planters on that account as the severe ones, more particularly a Dutch Creole fiscal, who lived in town, who ordered two or three hundred lashes, severely given, for the same offences for which Mr. B. would have ordered two and three dozen.

During my stay on this estate, I never witnessed Mr. B. order his negroes any punishment but once, when the manager was in town, and the foolish creatures would have it so; they began to presume too much upon his humanity, and disobey command, yet he only punished two of the worst, out of the whole, with a dozen each; at the same time telling them of the absurdity of their conduct, in a friendly manner like a parent. Another time, when all the white people of the estate were at home, some of the most daring, during the night, broke into the rum store; and making a large breach in a strong new wall, they carried off a great deal of rum, and destroyed more. When the thieves

were discovered, Mr. B. punished them with only two dozen each; and shortly after, when the clothing was serving out, one of these men got his allowance with the others. When the manager said, "That is one of the thieves who broke into the store," Mr. B. paused a little, then said, "Had I known so he should have had none at this time; as he has them let him keep them." This says more than I can.

The clothing which we served out to them was of the best quality I ever saw given to slaves; the women had shawls,* Salempores, petticoats, and even scissors, thread, needles, and pins, and indeed everything which they could require,—the drivers and head people getting a double allowance. The whole gang had each a dram served out to them every day; and in very wet weather, when it is very cold even in this climate, the bell was rung by Mr. B.'s order, and the people turned in; and if the weather was bad they were not turned out again that day; in fact no body of free people, in

* A kind of shawl made of cloth brought from Salem in the East Indies.

any country were so well attended to by their employers, as was this gang of negroes, by the governor and Mr. B.; but the manager was as bad as they were good.

I ever treated the negroes as my fellow creatures. Mr. Potts, when by ourselves, often abused me for this, saying I courted popularity among them; and he did all in his power to make me leave the estate. Indeed I had no occasion to be harsh, for I had no trouble with any of them, save a few of the old and stubborn Africans. Philip, the head driver, was a quiet unassuming negro, inoffensive in the extreme; but Robin, the second driver, often got drunk, and then was full of mouth, and gave me much trouble. The overseers on this estate were allowed to give liquor to the slaves when they exerted themselves in the boiling-house; and this authority I used with discretion, to forward the work: the negroes said, "Massa Alexand no tingy Kotchman,—far too much tingy Kotchmen, he no one." This was a great offence in the manager's eyes; and, in revenge, he heaped duties and abuse upon me, until I was forced to leave the estate. I did not choose to complain to my kind employers,

but resolved to state the reasons of my giving up the employment they had so generously given me, and of which I stood so much in need.

Lest my reader lose patience, I shall hurry over the events that befel me in Demerara, and here give, once for all, the duties of an overseer, imposed upon me by this manager, even upon this excellent plantation. I was often afterwards forced to submit to more severe.

My constitution, which had been completely broken by my service in Ceylon, had never recovered the shock it there received, and this quite incapacitated me for long-continued or violent exertion; besides, I had twice an attack of fever. It was not Mr. Bagot's wish that I, or any of his people, should be oppressed, yet I had no means of avoiding it but by complaining, and laying myself open to the malice and misrepresentations of Mr. Potts. Being the second overseer, my duties lay in the field with the gangs, but I was obliged by him to remain in the boiling-house between eleven and one o'clock, while the negroes were at breakfast. When we came home at dusk, I remained in the boiling-house until the slaves came home with the grass, then I had to call

the list and see the grass thrown, to count the stock, and set the watch for the night, and remain in the boiling-house until eight o'clock. If spent with fatigue, I rested my foot upon the copper wall, or sat down, I was assailed by a volume of abuse, and ordered off the estate, as I was indeed almost every day. In these disagreeable circumstances, not more so than every unfortunate overseer was liable to, I at length wrote to a friend and manager, who gave me an engagement. I left this place of torment, unfortunately for me in Mr. Bagot's absence, and resolved to write to him, as I was fearful of losing my appointment, a canoe and two negroes having come for me, and my employer was not to be at home for some length of time.

On the 25th July, 1816, I set out for Richmond Hill, Island of Laguan. As we proceeded in the canoe, I felt sorrowful to quit my kind employers without taking leave. Being exposed to the hot sun in the open canoe, I felt an attack of fever come on, and slowly increase until we reached Richmond Hill; when I felt very ill, but hoped it would wear off. With Mr. Maclagan's consent, I proceeded to town in a plantation sloop, to settle my affairs before I

commenced. The fever increased most rapidly. As I was forced to remain on deck for two days and two nights, without bed or covering of any kind, upon my arrival at Georgetown, I was under the necessity to be assisted to my friend, Mr. Thompson's, where I was put to bed, and soon became alarmingly ill, so much so that my life was despaired of. Yet I felt in my own breast a presentiment that I would recover, as I lay without the power of utterance, and had my feelings torn by those around me, who idly looked on, and in affected accents deplored my hopeless case, and talked of my death and funeral as commonplace topics. A fellow lodger of the name of Hansler, had been my physician until now, but they became alarmed, and Dr. Smith was sent for. My face and eyes were swelled in a shocking manner, and as yellow as a guinea. I turned as he came to the side of my mattress, and saw at once he considered my case as hopeless. The doctor retired, saying, "He will die through the course of the night; but watch him well, for he will in a short time become delirious." Immediately the Venetian blinds were secured, and every thing was removed with which I might injure myself. I

felt a melancholy sensation steal over my mind, yet hope preponderated. They all retired to rest, leaving Phillis, a negro man belonging to my host to watch me. During the night the delirious fit came on ; I had risen and partially broken the blinds, knocked out the candle, and over-set many articles in the room, bruising myself much, yet Phillis never awoke. Next day I had lucid intervals, with excessive thirst, and I gradually recovered. My physician, Dr. Smith, was much surprised at my recovery. I was denied as much water as I would have drunk ; and never will I forget how luxuriously I used to banquet, after stealing down upon my hands and knees, to the water-pots which stood below the sideboard. There would I swill to repletion, then crawl back in the same manner, and was never the worse for it, but recovered my strength rapidly to the astonishment of all. What grieved me most was that this sudden sickness, which lasted long, rendered it impossible for me to write to Mr. Bagot, and give the reasons for my apparent ingratitude in leaving him.

On the 20th August, I left town for my new situation, fearful of losing it, yet so weak I was glad

of assistance down to the water's edge. The plantation, Richmond Hill, belonged to Mrs. Nugent, a widow lady, at this time in America with her son who was in bad health. I commenced my duties the morning after my arrival, weak as I was. The gang consisted of 120 negroes and coloured slaves, some of whom were Barbadians. They were very different from the Governor's slaves ; and I saw more of the real disposition of the negroes here than I had yet seen, as on the Dirien estate their natural propensities were kept under control ; here they did not restrain themselves, and there was continually some mischief or other on foot. Every gang of negroes I have known has one or more head people among themselves to whom they look up. These call meetings of the others to hatch mischief, concoct their measures, and make cat's-paws of the less assuming ; these are their lawyers and spokesmen when any thing is to be said or done, but in general they contrive to screen themselves from punishment. Mr. Maclagan was an excellent manager ; I never saw a plantation kept in better order ; he was firm but not too severe with his slaves, yet they hated him mortally ;

as he had been for a considerable time on the estate, a thing the slaves by no means like, for the managers, by remaining long, become too knowing for them, and prevent many of the tricks they can play off with a new one. This rendered his and my attention and labour incessant, as they took every opportunity unperceived to injure the property belonging to the estate. There is no trusting even the best of slaves ; they are in general all liars and thieves. They would neither feed nor water the mules, unless watched and forced ; they willingly broke their furniture ; injured the mill to spoil and retard the work, and broke the legs of the poor dumb animals, all with the view to get the manager turned off. Nothing gives them more pleasure than to see the white people at variance, and to bring about this they will invent a thousand lies. They attempted, by falsehood, to set the manager against me, but he knew them too well. Thus my time passed on, all my troubles being in my duties over them, at which I did not repine, as I looked for nothing else, and the manager never gave me an unnecessary word, but used me well. My spirits began to recover,

and I began to hope I would yet be enabled to recover my long-looked for means of reaching Carriacou. But my evil destiny was down upon me again; the slaves had so long complained that the attorney came to the estate for the second time since my arrival, when the negroes boldly accused the manager of killing one of the drivers by kicking him in the belly, which was a falsehood invented by themselves, for the man died of inflammation in the bowels. I saw him opened myself, and he had neither been flogged nor struck during my stay on the estate; he never required it. The attorney did not believe them, and left the estate, without attaching any blame to the manager. During all this time the thieving and destruction of property went on in spite of our utmost efforts. The negroes called the manager four-eyes, from a little fish so called, which is very active, and swims near the margin of the water along the coast. This fish is often shot for sport, but seldom eaten.

Mr. Potts, who, unknown to me, had given up his management of the Governor's estate, a month before I unfortunately left it, was now out of employ. The attorney being a countryman and ac-

quaintance of Potts, made a handle of the complaints of the slaves, and gave Mr. Maclagan his leave, appointing my enemy in his stead. My friend was in great esteem with his mistress, but she was unfortunately absent. He immediately gave up his charge, and I followed him of necessity, not choosing to suffer again under Potts.* Thus, on the 19th November, I was again out of employment, with no resource but to return to town, where I remained until the 18th December, getting into debt, and sinking farther in misery. I, at last, got employment on a small estate called the Free and Easy, salary 600 guilders a-year; it was a very sickly estate, on which many white people had died. At my departure, my landlady seized my trunk and clothing, for 13 guilders I owed her; thus I was forced to begin my duties utterly destitute of clothing, save what was on my back, and I suffered much in consequence; it was with difficulty I got my hammock from her. The estate was a very poor one, with a small gang; the manager, Mr. Stewart,

* Potts was afterwards forced to leave the colony for cruelty to the negroes.

was solely bent on making money by any means, so that I, his overseer, fared as hard as the negroes ; the two diets per day, one at nine in the morning, the other at one in the afternoon, consisted only of salt-fish and plaintains, with occasionally a bit of fresh pork ; from two until nine next morning, I never broke my fast.

I had not much trouble with the slaves on this estate, as the gang was small ; still they were negroes, and carried on their evil practices as far as they could. On my arrival, there were seven of the worst of them in the barracks (jail) in town for bad conduct. They were soon brought to the estate, and punished in presence of the Dutch fiscal, the burgher captain, manager, myself, and the whole gang. The punishment was most horrible ; when it was over, the fiscal made a speech to them, telling them he was born in the colony, and knew all their ways, how they strove against their managers and overseers, to have them turned away, and no sooner did they obtain a change, than they commenced again, in hopes that they might get done as they liked ; but if they brought him upon the estate again, what had been inflicted

now was but a flea-bite to what he would order next visit ; and he finished by an address to the drivers and head people, who could prevent, if they chose, a great deal of the mischief that was done.

Of the whole slave population, I felt most for the slave-drivers in general ; many of whom were rendered most miserable, and wished in vain to be common working slaves, spite of the little advantages they derived from their situation ; for many of the managers punish the drivers for the faults of the slaves, saying, they are to blame if the work is badly done, or if there is not enough of it. The slave-driver is always punished, yet the negroes are often so refractory that they will not obey the driver, and he dares not punish them unless when ordered by the manager or overseer, and while they stand over him. As he lives among, and associates with them, they render him miserable in numerous ways, killing his fowls and pigs during the night, or destroying his little garden ; and should he even detect the offender, he dare not complain lest worse befall him.

To my hard labour and fare I submitted, resolved to endure every thing, rather than the destitution I

had suffered while out of employment ; but my endeavours could not ward off sickness ; again I was attacked by fever, and lay in my hammock neglected ; for four days I saw no human creature but a black boy who brought my victuals twice a-day, as if I had been in perfect health. The manager told me if I could not do my duty, I must leave the estate ; yet I could not leave my hammock. At length the fever abated, but was succeeded by an iliac passion ; still I lay neglected roaring in my agony. So acute were my sufferings, so extreme my despair, I looked about for some means of putting a period to my wretched existence. The manager became alarmed for my life, and urged me in the most unfeeling manner to quit the estate. I thought at this period of my life, my heart would burst.

In the evening of the fourth day I had a visit from the doctor, for the first time ; but he did me no good, as the carelessness of those around me did not assist his efforts. At length I was removed to town, in a ship's boat. I scarce know how I was enabled to endure my sufferings without nature sinking under them.

Upon my arrival I was admitted into the colon-

ial hospital, where I first got any relief, after thirteen days of the most dreadful suffering. Drs. Webster and Duncan treated me with the utmost humanity. I left the hospital as soon as I possibly could, although there was no constraint; for I might have remained as long as I chose in this asylum for the sick and unfortunate, of whom there were by far too many at this time in the colony, like myself all anxious to make their escape from it, but prevented by poverty's fatal power. Some of these unfortunates were obliged to enlist into the 60th regiment, and others, who were willing to do the same, were, like myself, quite unfit for it, languishing in abject misery about both town and country, abused and insulted for what they could not prevent. But let me hurry out of this scene of suffering, upon which I have dwelt by far too long.

The next estate I was on was the Bee-hive. It belonged to a Mr. M. Van Barley, a Creole Dutchman. My salary, as second overseer, was to be six hundred guilders. I had little hopes of remaining long, as there had been twenty-five changes on the estate within four months, many of the over-

seers not remaining above three or four days. The gang of negroes upon this estate was the worst I ever beheld, and the worst used,—under-fed and over-wrought, without any encouragement or time to themselves. Thus I will give both extremes of slavery, as I have no hypothesis to support ; I state the facts as I found them, without extenuation or exaggeration, letting the truth speak for itself. The slaves here were also well flogged, but not to such an extent at once as it was often repeated. The gang was large and chiefly Creoles. They spoke good English and Dutch, were very knowing, insolent, refractory, and of a sanguinary turn ; the old slaves were Africans, and the parents of the young ones, with all the bad African habits, speaking good English likewise. It is a just remark that the better English the slaves speak, they are the more knowing, froward, and insolent.

The estate was just in the change from cotton to sugar, and consequently all the duties of the slaves were new to them ; they therefore made a pretext of this, and wilfully did all they could in a bungling way, in spite of the lash shewing insolence and disobedience. Indeed there was great cause of dissa-

tisfaction on all sides, for the canes on a new estate are never so rich as on an old one ; and their juice contains a greater proportion of water than the old plantation canes, though they look as well.

Paying no regard to this, the manager looked for as many hogsheads of sugar to be boiled off in a day as on the neighbouring estates of the same extent and number of slaves. The first strike was taken when I was there. From the newness of every thing, the sugar was the blackest and softest I ever saw. As we went on the quality improved, but it was utterly impossible to reach the desired quantity. Shortly after we began to grind, the proprietor and manager rode up to me, where I was busy superintending, and demanded in a peremptory voice why we did not boil off the same quantity as the other estates. "Where does the fault lie?" said the manager, "Is it in me?" I replied, "No." "Is it in the drivers?" "No." "Is it in the cultivation?" "No!" "Then the people are to blame!" They immediately rode off, and when we returned to breakfast, each slave with his load of worry-worry upon his head, (an African name for the field trash,) the proprietor was on the spot,

when the manager flogged the whole gang, drivers and all. I was truly sorry for them, but durst not say so ; the women wept and staggered after they arose with their loads to carry it to the stock-hole. The manager and proprietor said they hoped that it would have some good effect, and prevent future punishment ; that he himself was present to sanction it, and prevent complaints ; but it had no effect, as the negroes were completely hardened, and evinced a determined spirit of revolt.

I became afraid of them ; for this very day I found canes repeatedly left uncut, covered by the trash. To the person whose fault it was, I gave half-a-dozen lashes ; but he would not lie still to receive them, but rolled about and roared. In inflicting this light punishment, the driver cut his eye. Immediately his father, who was working in the next row, on his left, became enraged, and ran at me with a sharp cutlass in his hand, to cut me down, when, to appease him, I said the fault was not mine, it was the manager's orders ; he stood still, looking sternly at me, the cutlass lifted in his hand, and said, " You no good, it is all your doing, you put my son's eye out." All the others ceased working ; I

really thought they were going to break out at this moment, and chop me down as a commencement. I roughly ordered him to his work, and referred to the driver, who was just behind them looking on ; when he spoke to him, he stooped to his work. A more insolent gang I never saw, or more regardless of punishment. They gave mouth on all occasions, asking who I was that ordered them, saying they had as good a right to be free as myself, or their master. To these speeches I made no answer ; indeed they said both to proprietor and manager, they had no right to make slaves of them ; their liberty ran constantly in their heads, and they bore the most deadly malice against every white on the estate.

My heart bled for the head driver, who was punished time after time and abused, yet he was one of the most harmless amongst them ; his life was rendered miserable, his breech was one large sore, yet he was still punished on it. I told him it would be better for him to use his whip upon the slaves, but he said he dared not, for they would kill him in the night ; that they grumbled at and cursed him already, and he did not know what to do, and ear-

nestly wished himself a common negro, beseeching me to speak to the manager to have him placed in the gang ; I did this, but he refused.

It was impossible for either him or me to get the work done to the manager's satisfaction, maugre our utmost efforts. I never ordered so much punishment on any estate, yet I was found fault with for not punishing enough. My day and night duties were most severe, far more than human nature could undergo, yet I fought on for 18 days, when I was again taken ill from fatigue and over-exertion, and was forced to leave. It was not many months after my leaving this estate when the slaves did revolt and take to the bush ; and I do not wonder at it, for they were ill used ; they had no encouragement during their long, fatiguing duties, even the Sabbath day was not all their own. Though it happened afterwards, I will give the sequel here.

The head overseer left the estate soon after me, and others in quick succession, when Mr. Charles, the proprietor's brother-in-law, went to the boiling-house. At length the gang took to the bush, and were joined by many runaway negroes of the neighbouring estates. They formed a camp near

some others which had been of long standing. They had implements of agriculture and weapons of offence, with whips, horns, and shells as signals. A small party of militia was formed and sent after them, as they came into the estates at night, destroying property and enticing away the negroes. This party was repulsed, when Mr. Charles, who had been a midshipman on board a man-of-war, urged on by his bravery, went into the bush, accompanied by Mr. Harrison, the engineer, and a few others. They were too weak, and were overpowered and cut down. A stronger party was then sent out, accompanied by a number of Bucks (native Indians) with bows and arrows, who routed them. A number of them were brought to Georgetown and tried; and seven of them were executed on Thursday the 6th of May 1818, the day upon which I left the colony to join the patriots.

These desperadoes, on the day of their trial, when placed at the bar, said boldly and fearlessly, "Massa, no make tory too long, do beesiness one time." They came to the scaffold cheerfully, calling out as they looked around them, "Good bye, massa—nigga, good bye—massa, every body;"

and some of them said, "I soon go back to my own country;" calling to those they knew by name, as if they had been on the eve of embarking for a voyage at sea. The same day, a free yellow man was whipped under the gallows, branded and banished the colony, and a Jew underwent the same punishment.

Mr. Van Barley, the proprietor, and Mr. Stacey, the manager, were then brought before the court of policy, (Demerara parliament;) after a long investigation, Stacey was deprived of his situation as manager, and bound down never to have a management in the colony. He afterwards went to Mahaica Creek, and commenced merchant. The proprietor was likewise deprived of all management of his own property, and had to employ an attorney, in whom all charge was to rest, he having no power to interfere although he lived on the estate; all he could give directions in, was his own household, garden, stock, or any domestic concern.

Being a little recovered, I began a pilgrimage to Berbice, in quest of employment, as that place was well spoken of in Demerara. I was very ill in my

health, yet my anxiety urged me on. I did not succeed, for the country was suffering much from a long and unprecedented drought. Many of the estates were abandoned from want of water; and numbers of white people like myself out of employment. It was melancholy to look upon this generally fertile country. The cotton bushes looked like the furze in this country after being scorched with fire; the sugar canes were scanty and drooping, not a green patch to be seen. My way was weary and fatiguing; as the plantation houses were commonly a good way from the road-side,—but I was in general more civilly received at them than in the sister colony. To the river Berbice, which is one hundred miles from Georgetown, I plodded my heartless and weary way, crossed over to New Amsterdam, and proceeded forty miles further eastward, to the last sugaring estate. The roads were very good all the way. This last estate was but a short distance from the river which divides the colonies of Berbice and Nicara. Nicara is a small colony thinly inhabited, unless by the Bucks; it joins the Dutch colony of Surinam, the same as Essequibo is joined to Demerara. I could have

walked to the Brazils in the same manner, by crossing rivers and creeks; for where there are no established ferries, the Bucks convey people over in their canoes, assisting the traveller, when he is at a loss, on his way. I felt a great temptation to do so, but my lowness of spirits made me quite listless. So I returned once more for Georgetown, and reached it with half my last earnings consumed in payment of passage-money over creeks and rivers.

Fortunately for me I soon got a situation on La Reduit estate, under my good friend, Mr. Maclagan. I need not fatigue my reader with details, such as I have given already. The gang of negroes was a very bad one; they were too near the town, and carried on a systematic plan of robbery and peculation, in which they were abetted by the low grog shops in town; which are ever ready receiving-houses for the pilferings of the negroes. It was in vain that every art was tried to put a stop to this; the negroes were insolent and refractory, all of them had money, some of them fowlingpieces; and the propinquity of the estate to Georgetown gave facilities to them in selling their pigs and poultry. The fruit which they

sold from their little patches of ground, was also a source of revenue to them, had they been content with it ; but there is nothing so valuable in the eyes of a slave as what he has purloined. The low state of my finances, and the scantiness of my wardrobe, rendered me an object not worthy of respect in their eyes ; and, therefore, every thing in their power was done to thwart me. Often on a Sabbath morning, and at other times, these slaves took money from their pockets, and grinning said, “ You a poor buckerah, you no shew me as much as dat.” Had the white people been always true to each other things on every estate had gone much better. It was the delight of the slaves to see us disunited. “ Ha,” they would say, “ country kill country—dat good here—bad in own country.” Dan, the head driver, had a particular malice against me, and would not do his duty ; he was a favourite with the manager, who alone can punish the drivers. I was quite miserable, and weary of a planter’s life, as all were who had any thing to do with negroes. It was at this time I first thought of joining the patriots ; yet the accounts we daily received of massacres and famine were dreadful ; still I felt I

might better my circumstances, but could scarcely make them worse.

At this time, in my lowest state, I received a letter from home, in which Mr. B. informed me my father had been so kind as allow me to draw a bill of exchange on Mr. Dunlop of Irvine, for twenty pounds. My heart was as grateful as my need was great. Mr. Thomson cashed my bill; I furnished myself, and paid a few debts with a joyful heart, but it was ere two days as gloomy as ever, for a villain of the name of Peter Grant, who had been discharged from the estate I was now on, borrowed the negro I had with me to assist in carrying my bundles. I allowed the boy good-naturedly to go, while I was engaged with my friend settling my little account; he walked off with the negro who carried my bundles, and I never saw more of them. The boy did not make his appearance for six weeks after. I had rode home thinking to overtake him, when I did not I hoped he was following me. I would not have mentioned this circumstance, were it not that this fellow, and seven such like, in a few days after the slave's return, stole a sloop loaded with coffee out of the harbour, and went over to the

patriots. I met him in Angustura, where I suffered much from him, during all the time I was in the country. This he could not have done, had Mr. Maclagan allowed me to go in quest of him, upon the return of the boy, but it was unfortunately delayed. I remained five weeks upon La Reduit estate, when my old enemy, the fever, forced me to leave it. After my recovery, I was five weeks on another estate, called the Hope, belonging to Mr. Deggs, a Dutchman, on the Arabian Coast, Essequibo; but here I was as much vexed by the negroes as on the other estates. I was now heartily sick of having any thing to do with them, and made up my mind to join the patriots as soon as an opportunity offered, let the issue be what it might. I will therefore conclude my adventures in Demerara, with an account of a voyage I made up the river, to the farthest settlement, during the time I was out of employment, and waiting an opportunity to leave the colony, to join the army of Bolivar.

END OF VOL. I.

J. Johnstone, 18, St. James's Square.

Alexander, Alexander,

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